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A N
E S S A Y
O N
TRADE AND COMMERCE:

Containing
OBSERVATIONS ON TAXES,
As they are supposed to affect
The Price of Labour in our Manufactories:
TOGETHER WITH
Some interesting Reflections on the Importance
O F O U R
TRADE TO AMERICA.

To which is added the
OUT-LINES, or SKETCH, of a SCHEME
For the
MAINTENANCE and EMPLOYMENT
O F
THE POOR,
The Prevention of Vagrancy, and Decrease of the
P O O R ' S R A T E S.

Humbly addressed to the
LEGISLATURE OF THE KINGDOM,
By the Author of *Considerations on Taxes, &c.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for S. HOOPER, N^o. 25, LUDGATE-HILL,
MDCCLXX.



T O T H E
EARL of HALIFAX,
LORD PRIVY SEAL,
A N D
KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE
ORDER OF THE GARTER.

My LORD,

IT will doubtless be deemed presumption in me to lay before Your Lordship a work, the subject of which, You are universally allowed to be the best judge of, in the kingdom.

I confess, my Lord, it was my ambition, to have the sanction of Your name to a book, which, from the

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obscurity of its author, might otherwise have been neglected.

I do not flatter myself, that the perusal of these pages, will afford Your Lordship any farther pleasure than what will naturally flow from your humane disposition, to encourage even the weakest endeavours towards promoting public utility: and yet I must venture to hope that Your Lordship will find in this work, sentiments, in some measure, correspondent with, though much less perfect, than Your own.

Upon the whole, I am happy to have those sentiments pass in review under the eye of Your Lordship, as I shall, thereby, know their true and real weight, from a judgment, formed upon more exact principles, and improved by more extensive practice,

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than can be supposed to fall to the lot of any person in a private station.

Flattery, my Lord, seems, from the common custom of the world, to be a necessary part of a dedication; but, however necessary it may be to persons less known, and to merit less conspicuous, it has no foundation here; as Your Lordship's conduct in several very important public stations, speaks beyond all panegyric.

The First Lord of Trade, is an office of the highest importance to this kingdom; how well that was filled by You, my Lord, I need not tell the world; as no one ever displayed a greater fund of commercial knowledge, paid greater attention to the welfare of the nation, or made a more illustrious figure in it, than Your Lordship.

DEDICATION.

I have only to wish, my Lord, from the sincere love I bear my country, that such men may always fill the great offices of state, and that such measures may always be pursued, as will tend to improve our manufactures, extend our commerce, increase our naval force, and thereby make Great-Britain the richest and most powerful Kingdom in Europe.

I am,

MY LORD,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Most devoted and

Obedient Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

ABOUT April, 1765, when the misguided populace from Spital-Fields rose in great numbers, and in a riotous and disorderly manner applied to the King himself, complaining of want of labour, and dearness of provisions; it appeared to this writer, that their complaints were groundless; for, on the best enquiry he could make, he found that very few among them would have wanted employment, provided they would have laboured on reasonable terms; but, from the extravagant wages given in the gauze manufactory, that branch had found its way to places where frugality
and

and industry took place of idleness and debauchery, and where manufacturing people were glad to labour six days for the same money that many, in Spital-Fields, had received for the labour of three days only.

The shifting of this branch to Scotland, left many of these people without work, who would not submit to the lowering of their wages, though considerably more was offered them here, than is given in Scotland; neither would they return to other branches in the silk manufactory, though wanted; knowing they must work there at a lower rate: instead of which, they entered into illegal combinations, and even prevented those from working, who were disposed so to do, much in the manner they have done lately.

At that critical time, the author of these sheets published a tract, entitled, Considerations on Taxes, &c. in which
he

he endeavoured to prove, that neither want of employment, nor dearness of provisions, were the true causes of their complaints.

In that tract he ventured to say, that the appearance of a scarcity of labour in the silk manufactory, and the melancholly representations of the distresses of the poor manufacturers, on that account, were encouraged by the masters, in order, the more easily to obtain an act for the total prohibition of all foreign wrought silks. As to the other cause of their complaint, namely, the high price of provisions, he asserted, that provisions were cheaper, at that time, in this kingdom, than in any trading state in Europe; that is, the relation between the price of necessaries: and the value of labour was, at that time, such, that a man could purchase more necessaries with any given quantity of labour in England, than he could in France or Holland,

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Holland, or any other commercial state in Europe; and, as no one hath, since, contradicted this assertion, he is still in the belief of its being true. Notwithstanding this, the rich masters of manufacturies in Spital-Fields, set on foot a subscription, and we were told, in the public papers, "that near three thousand manufacturing poor had been relieved by it;" I add, without labour of any sort---A shrewd temptation to idleness and debauchery. Labour of some kind or other should have been found for these people; for the leisure a labouring man has to spend money given him in charity, is of fatal consequence, as it hath a tendency to make idleness grow into habit. This writer, then, spoke prophetically of this measure; and urged, that to give a man a day's labour, and a shilling for it, was better for the man, as well as for the community, than to give him the shilling as a charity.

charity. He has now lived to see this fulfilled by the ingratitude and insolence of the same people, many of them at least, who were then relieved; and that some of those very masters, who then relieved them, now suffer for their imprudent conduct.

The great clamour in regard to the dearness of provisions was then eagerly laid hold of, and propagated by the enemies of the government, who attributed this dearness to the weight of the national debt, and the burthen of taxes consequent thereon.

To combat and refute these plausible opinions, by arguments drawn from experience, was the design of that little treatise, which was received by the public in a manner quite beyond the expectations of the author. Two editions were soon sold, and an appendix, relative to the management of the poor, was ready for the press, to be added to the
third;

third; but several of the author's friends advised him to make some material alterations in the work, to enlarge it, by adding many things of consequence, and more applicable to the present state of our affairs, both at home and abroad.

This he has done in the following sheets; in which, after giving a concise account of the rise and progress of manufactures and commerce in Europe, he has produced a number of arguments drawn from experience, and the authorities of some of the best writers on this subject, to prove that the price of labour is by no means raised on the account of our taxes; and farther, that the price of labour is not governed by the price of provisions; and that no state was ever known to make any considerable figure in commerce, where provisions were at a low price, or to be obtained by little labour. The author has added, some thoughts on monopolies, proving

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proving them, in general, to be injurious to the trade of this kingdom.

In the following sheets, the author has also shewn, that the making corn an article of commerce has been, and must continue to be, of great use to this kingdom; that it tends to keep it at a moderate price, and will always prevent a scarcity. He has, likewise, slightly touched on the different value of our silver, compared with France; and shewn how the price of labour is affected by it.

All these things are treated of, in as concise a manner as the nature of the subjects would admit; but, the important consideration of our American trade is treated more at large, and with a view to the reconciling the present unhappy differences between the mother-country and her colonies. The whole being intended as An Essay on Trade and Commerce, interspersed with a variety of remarks, which the author hopes will prove both useful and entertaining.

I

To these important considerations the author hath added the outlines, or sketch, of a scheme for the employment and maintenance of the poor, and the easing the lands of their present great burthen of poor's-rates; humbly hoping that the wisdom of the British Legislature will improve and bring it to perfection.

THOUGHTS

THOUGHTS

ON

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

THAT the riches and strength of a state consists in the number of its inhabitants, and more especially in its labouring people, provided they are properly employed, is a truth never yet controverted : as true is it, that an idle and debauched populace is one of the greatest grievances a commercial state can labour under. Indeed, in such an unhappy situation, no state can long continue a commercial state ; for if the populace are in general unemployed, such state can produce but few manufactures

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factures for exportation, and of course can have but few ships, few sailors, and a very inconsiderable naval force.

A state may, from the produce of its lands, be able to support its inhabitants; but such state can no more expect to grow rich by its internal commerce, than a man can expect to increase his fortune by winning money from his wife and children. But, what is worse, such a state can never be in a situation to secure itself against the encroachments of ambitious neighbours, more especially if it be an island. On the continent, weak states may sometimes be protected by the territories of neighbouring states lying between them and their enemies, and a mutual return of good offices might ensue; but a weak island, that is, an island without foreign commerce, and of course without a powerful navy, can neither protect itself, nor be of consequence enough to be protected

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ted by other states. An island blessed by nature with advantages for foreign commerce, such as good ports, navigable rivers, &c. is doubly called upon to exert itself in that way; we want not an oracle to tell us, as it did the Athenians, that without our wooden walls, we are immediately open to the attacks of any maritime power which can bring an army to invade us. The attacks might be made at many different places, and thereby the defenders be so harrassed and divided, that the bravest people in the world must soon be conquered by any power which had a great number of land forces, supported by a powerful navy, to bring against them.

These things are only hinted here, to shew the great importance of foreign commerce to such a state as ours, and that nothing should be left unattempted which might tend to its support and extension. The deplorable figure which

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this kingdom would make without it, may be judged of, not only from what has been said above, but also from looking back to what it was before manufactures and commerce had gained any considerable footing here, viz. till the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Before this glorious era, England knew very little of manufactures, while those of Spain and Italy were in great perfection, for that time. The latter of these carried on all the trade to the Levant; and the other European states consigned to them the raw materials which their several countries produced, as being best capable of manufacturing them.

In the frequent voyages made by the Italians to the North, they found Flanders a proper and convenient repository for their manufactures; and the Flemings being an industrious people, and encouraged by their nobility, who
granted

granted the merchants particular privileges, they soon became manufacturers themselves; whilst the English continued as yet ignorant of the great advantages arising from manufactures and commerce. At length, by the emigration of the Flemings, on the Count's of Flanders withdrawing these privileges, manufactures were attempted in England: for we find, that either through our want of skill or industry, in the reign of Edward III. the Flemings could buy our wool, pay high custom out, manufacture it, and pay custom in, and yet sell their manufactures cheaper than the natives.

In the reign of Edward VI. indeed the English seem to have set, in good earnest, about encouraging manufactures and employing the poor. This we learn from a remarkable statute which runs thus; " That all vagrants shall be
 " branded, and be the slaves of those

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“ who apprehend them, for two years ;
 “ to be fed with bread and water, with
 “ an iron collar or ring fastened on their
 “ necks, arms, or legs ; and upon run-
 “ ning away, to be farther branded, and
 “ be condemned to slavery for life ;
 “ and upon running away again, to be
 “ hanged.” Stat. 1 Edw. VI. c. 3.

From hence it may be observed how
 very prejudicial to the state it was then
 thought, to have any of the labouring
 poor unemployed. It is surely of equal
 consequence now, though different re-
 medies may be applied. That which
 the author hath proposed, in the con-
 clusion of this work, he hopes may
 prove as efficacious to prevent vagrancy
 and common begging, though far less
 cruel and tyrannical than this statute.

But even with all this care to enforce
 labour and industry, in the reign of
 Edw. VI. England was brought very
 little forward in commerce, and her

manufactures were very slowly growing into repute, till our glorious Queen ELIZABETH, aided by able ministers and the wisdom of her parliament, carried the superiority of both to an amazing pitch. The famous act of navigation produced great employment for our shipping, and our naval power soon became the terror of the world.

But before this period, new worlds of riches were laid open to the Portuguese and Spaniards, and the immense quantity of gold and silver brought from thence, soon rendered the immediate possessors of it neglectful of manufactures and agriculture; for the loss of which, their millions made them but poor amends, for they became weak, though abounding with gold and silver.

Surely nothing can shew, in a stronger point of view, the advantages of commerce, and the constant employment of the labouring people; nor bet-

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ter prove the truth of the proposition first laid down, namely, "that the true
 " riches of a state consist in the num-
 " ber of its inhabitants, properly em-
 " ployed." However, this will be farther illustrated in the course of this work. But to proceed,

Whilst the Spaniards and Portuguese were neglecting their manufactures, and sinking into luxury, sloth and effeminacy, as if they thought that the acquisition of riches was the sole road to greatness; the other states of Europe, who were, happily I may say, excluded from these new worlds, thought themselves, nevertheless, much interested in the discovery, and immediately set, in good earnest, about sharing part of this treasure; and the way was obvious; Portugal and Spain had declined in their manufactures, and now purchased from other states those things which their
 own

own people had hitherto supplied them with for their foreign settlements. Riches will ever obey the infallible attraction of labour and industry. This is the case, not only between one state and another, but between the individuals of every state; the rich support the poor, and the industrious poor supply the rich; so that every man must bear his part in the common labour of the world, either by himself or his substitute. Thus the gold and silver from Mexico, Peru, and the Brasils, passed through the hands of the Spaniards and Portuguese, to England, Holland, and France, with accumulated advantages. Before this time, necessity had produced industry, riches, and freedom in the United Provinces; their manufactures were improved, and the merchants acquired the sovereignty of vast kingdoms in the East Indies, whilst the nation secured to itself inexhaustible riches

riches by the exclusive trade to the Spice islands.

Trading companies were now formed in England in imitation of the Dutch, and we began to figure as a commercial state; our naval power was greatly increased; and our manufactures, of various kinds, were thought to be the best and most perfect of any in Europe, and bore the best price.

In France, the immortal COLBERT, about this time, revived every sort of industry, and supported the arts of leisure and peace amidst ambition and desire of conquest; the highest encouragements were given to manufacturers of every kind; but more especially to foreigners, as I shall have occasion to mention hereafter, when I endeavour to account for our being undersold in foreign markets.

I frequently mention the Dutch as well as the French, when I would recommend

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commend examples of sobriety, frugality, and industry ; but I would always be understood to point out the French, as our most dangerous rivals in trade. I mention them as a power, whom all Europe should view with a jealous eye ; but I would wish to direct that eye to their growing trade, more than to their fleets and armies. The great ministers of France were very sensible, that an extended commerce must be their first step to universal empire, and that they could never be very formidable without it. England and Holland are the only powers capable of checking the trade of France ; and surely these should heartily unite, not only as friends and protestants, but for the preservation of each other, from their restless and ambitious neighbours. And thus England appears to be greatly interested in procuring a good barrier for the Dutch.

To let the French continue to under-

derfell us in foreign markets, and by any arts to worm us out of our trade, would be to neglect all the natural and acquired advantages we have, in commerce and maritime affairs, not only over them, but over the whole world.

That the French have underfold us in Turkey, Italy, and Spain, very few will dispute; and in consequence of this, that we have, in a great measure, lost our trade with those states, is very clear; our enquiry then will be, what the French have done on their parts, and what we have done, or neglected to do, on ours, that might cause the loss of these branches of commerce to us.

A celebrated writer *, to whom the world is obliged for a very useful Dictionary, has fixed upon our national debt, and the perpetuated taxes consequent thereon, as the source of this loss. He argues thus; “ High taxes must raise

* Postlethwayte.

“ the

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“ the price of necessaries, an high price
“ of necessaries must raise the price of
“ labour, and an high price of labour
“ must enhance the value of commo-
“ dities; so that the state, in which
“ labour is cheapest, will always be
“ able to undersell other states, and
“ gain their trade.” This may be true
in part, but we hope to make it ap-
pear, that the national debt is far from
being the principal source of the high
price of labour in this kingdom; that
it operates very little that way, and that
there are other more powerful causes of
the high price of labour in our manu-
factories; the principal of which ap-
pears to be the general disposition of our
manufacturing populace to idleness and
debauchery. As in these arguments I
may appear very paradoxical, I shall
not venture to make use of any, but
such as are drawn from experience,
our best guide in these matters, or
from

from the best authorities. To say that taxes tend to lower the price of labour, is a paradox that experience alone will teach us how to explain; and which we shall do in a variety of instances: indeed it is a truth known to almost every master of a manufactory in the kingdom, that when provisions are cheap, labour is always, relatively, dear. Yet I wonder not that the contrary opinion should prevail, as every one clearly sees, that if a populace can live cheap, they can afford to labour cheap; from whence it is erroneously concluded that they will do so.

But those who have closely attended to the disposition and conduct of a manufacturing populace, have always found that to labour less and not cheaper has been the consequence of a low price of provisions; and that when provisions are dear, from whatever cause, labour is always plentiful, always well performed,

formed, and of course is always cheaper than when provisions are at a low price.

To explain this, let us observe, first, that mankind, in general, are naturally inclined to ease and indolence, and that nothing but absolute necessity will enforce labour and industry. Secondly, that our poor, in general, work only for the bare necessities of life, or for the means of a low debauch; which when obtained, they cease to labour till roused again by necessity. Thirdly, that it is best for themselves, as well as for society, that they should be constantly employed.

First, that mankind, in general, are naturally inclined to ease and indolence, we fatally experience to be true, from the conduct of our manufacturing populace, who do not labour, upon an average, above four days in a week, unless provisions happen to be very dear.--- When this is the case, a general industry

dustry is immediately created; workmen croud about the houses of master-manufacturers, begging for work, almost at any rate; and they work five or six days in the week instead of three or four. Labour being a kind of commodity, the quantity then offered tends to the lowering its price; and would do so, unless art or violence intervened. Thus far the paradox is explained by experience; and thus far it is proved, that dearness of provisions tends to lower the price of labour in manufactories.--- But farther to prove this, the very reverse happens, when wheat and other provisions are at a low price.---Tippling-houses and skittle-grounds are then crouded instead of their masters court-yards. Idleness and debauchery take place; labour grows scarce; masters are obliged to seek it, and court the labourer to his work; sometimes at an advanced price, in one shape or another; frequently

frequently by lending him money, which is lost if the man dies; indeed, this advanced money is hardly ever repaid; for whenever a master attempts to stop it, the journeyman applies to another, who, if he be a good workman, and the trade be brisk, will lend him money to pay his former master, and, perhaps, a little more; this is frequently the case in the crape manufactory at Norwich, where, I am well informed, some masters lose from fifty to eighty pounds a year in this way. In France, instead of tempting servants from their places, no master will employ the servant of another master, without first knowing that the servant is totally disengaged, and can obtain a very good character from his last employer. The good consequences arising from hence are obvious. But, then, this will also prove that the French have greater plenty of working hands, or that their manufacturing poor

are more industrious, and more solicitous to please their employers than the manufacturing people in England are. One reason, among many others, which I shall produce, why the French are able to undersell us, is, the great regularity and order, observed among their manufacturing people.

My second proposition is blended with the first.

My third proposition was, that it is best for themselves, as well as for society, that the poor should be constantly employed.

It has been shewn above, that a plenty of working hands tends in various ways, to make labour cheap. Any method, therefore, that will enforce labour and industry, will have the same effect as increasing the number of hands, and will convert what would otherwise be a burthen, into the riches and strength of the state.

A trad-

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A trading state cannot be too full of labouring people, whilst the produce of the land, cultivated in the best manner, is sufficient to support them; or an extended commerce to procure necessaries from other states, in exchange for her manufactures. By our foreign trade, and by our naval force to protect that trade, our manufactures are diffused throughout the world, and we need not fear too great an increase of people; for the lowering the price of labour and the improvement of our manufactures would be a natural consequence of such increase, and an increased foreign demand would follow of course.

A multitude of people being drawn together in a small territory will raise the price of provisions; but, at the same time, if the police be good, it must keep down the price of labour, make men industrious, and incline them to exert their best abilities in the improvement of manufactures.

Wherever there are but few hands labour must be dear of course, and dearest when provisions are so cheap, that those few are not obliged to labour above half their time for a maintenance.

But the most expeditious way of encreasing the number of people, keeping down the price of labour, enforcing industry, and improving our manufactures, is a general naturalization. Nothing, surely, can have a better effect in a state where manufacturing hands are wanted, where quantities of land lie uncultivated, or where labour is scarce and dear, from the idleness and debauchery of the manufacturing populace: for by opening our arms to foreigners, we shall not only improve our own manufactures, but also introduce the manufactures of foreigners, with all their arts and improvements; a spirit of industry and improvement would be created by it; which, besides unanimity
among

among our governors, in regard to the extension and protection of our trade, is all we seem to want, to make us the greatest people in the world.

A general naturalization, will operate more powerfully and more speedily than any other expedient, towards rendering the state populous, rich, and powerful. Its manufactures would be improved, its commerce extended, and its lands would be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection. But, some have asserted, "that a general naturalization might produce so great an influx of people, as to render provisions so scarce and dear, that numbers would be starved." To this it may be readily replied, that, though provisions might be rendered dearer by a great increase of people, yet, it is morally impossible that a famine should happen, or that the poor should be starved in a state enriched by extensive commerce. We

have large tracts of land yet uncultivated, and, also, much land not cultivated to its highest perfection; their improvement would employ a great number of hands, and produce great quantities of provisions. Besides, I can never admit, that the number of people in a state is limited by the produce of the lands, provided the state is enriched by extensive commerce; the contrary of this is proved by the states of Holland, where the produce of the lands, though they are cultivated at a great expence, and to the highest perfection, will not support the inhabitants; and, provisions are imported from other states, in exchange for their manufactures. In order to make room for foreigners, the Dutch have taken in, as it were, another element, and great numbers of them live upon the water.

It appears that England could never suffer by a general naturalization, notwithstanding

withstanding it has been so violently opposed: on the contrary, all ranks and degrees of men must be benefited by it. The gentry, the clergy, and the farmer, would be benefited by the improvement of the land. Manufactures would be improved and rendered cheaper; which, of course, would encrease our foreign trade, and thereby enrich the manufacturer, the broker, and the merchant; and, in consequence of the great number of ships and sailors constantly employed, our naval force would be the terror of our enemies through the world. The goodness of our laws would not only bring art and industry among us, but many would come and bring great riches with them, if, by a general naturalization, our arms were open to receive them. Employment would be created for every mechanical art; invention would be sharpened, industry enforced, and economy would naturally

follow. The idle and debauched, who now labour but four days in a week, and riot the other two, might, probably, complain; but of what? why, that by admitting people more industrious than themselves, they should be obliged to labour six days in the week, and live temperate and sober.

I remember one great objection to this scheme has been, that we should bring great numbers of Jews among us. This objection, if made on account of their religion, is totally inconsistent with the generous, noble spirit, of protestant Christians, who embrace all mankind as their fellow creatures, provided that in the general course of their lives, they act properly. Indeed, these people, (the Jews) have been persecuted, in almost every country by turns, both on account of their religion, and, also, from a desire of seizing their riches; and hence necessity operated, and drove
those

those people to the invention of bills of exchange (a remarkable era this in the commercial world) in order that they might lodge their treasure in the banks of those states where they thought it most secure ; and yet, bring what they wanted of it, in the way of traffick, to any part of the world ; and this augmented to a great degree the certainty and readiness of communication among trading nations. Every wise state, except ours, that is not under the influence of a rapacious and tyrannical inquisition, now give the Jews the most cordial reception among them. The Dutch, in particular, have many rich Jews among them, who have money to a great amount in our stocks, and who spend the interest of it in Holland. Would it not be better to have these people reside here, to keep their money, and have the advantages of their traffick among ourselves ? But prejudice makes
our

our politics, in this particular, different from many other states.

That idleness is a consequence of cheap living, may be gathered from a knowledge of human nature alone. Mankind, as I said above, are naturally so fond of ease and indolence, that they will not labour, while they have the means of idleness in their power; but, as soon as these means are exhausted, necessity again rouses them to their work; and from this cause, no state has ever yet made any considerable figure in commerce, where the necessities of life could be obtained by little labour.

But, formerly, this natural love of ease operated no farther than to prevent such states, where provisions were cheap, and idleness to be indulged, from extending their commerce; whilst in others, where a great number of people possessed but small territory, and where, of course, provisions were dear; there, Necessity has

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has proved the mother of Industry, as well as of Invention, and commerce hath been greatly extended. These are the operations of Nature, and have no very paradoxical appearance; but the fatal strides now made by the corrupted manners of our manufacturing populace, beyond the Natural love of ease, is greatly to be lamented.

My next proposition is, again, a kind of trade paradox, which experience in the conduct of our manufacturing people, alone, can explain; namely, that another cause of idleness, in this kingdom, is the want of a sufficient number of labouring hands. One would naturally, and upon the face of things, suppose that where hands are scarce, they should be all fully employed; but this is far from being the case, as is well known to the master manufacturers in this kingdom. Whenever, from an extraordinary demand for manufactures, labour grows scarce,

scarce, the labourers feel their own consequence, and will make their masters feel it likewise: it is amazing; but so depraved are the dispositions of these people, that, in such cases, a set of workmen have combined to distress their employer, by idling a whole day together. But then, let it be observed (as a farther proof of my general argument, viz. that necessity alone will enforce labour,) that these things never happen when wheat and other necessities are dear; labour is then too plentiful, and becomes too necessary to admit of such unnatural combinations; nor does this ever happen in a state, where there is plenty of labouring hands. The most efficacious remedy for these and many other evils, is a general naturalization, as hinted a few pages back; but, if that remedy will not be admitted in this kingdom, some other method should be found out, to
create

create a general industry; that the moderate labour of six days in the week may be so enforced as, in time, to grow habitual, as is the case with the Dutch; for this would be equal to an increase, of manufacturing people, near one third, and produce many millions, per annum, more in commodities: some think that a general industry, and the constant labour of those hands we have, would produce above twenty millions, per annum, in commodities, more than are now produced; of such vast consequence is sobriety, industry, and constant labour, to a commercial state.

But, as a farther proof that an high price of necessaries is not injurious to a trading state, I shall mention many other good consequences attending it. When provisions are dear, from any cause, the labour of the poor is performed with care, with assiduity, and a regard to the pleasing their employer.

Manu-

Manufactures are improved from an exertion of skill, and a laudable emulation in workmen to excel one another. Again---When, from an high price of necessaries, persons are obliged to labour six days in the week, they keep themselves sober, and the work of such men is always best performed. ---- It is difficult, after a few days debauch, for a man to return to his labour : when he does, it is with distaste and reluctance, often with an aching head and trembling hands, which render him incapable of performing his work in a proper manner ; and it is well known that the first day's work of a journeyman, after a few days of idleness and debauchery, is performed, beyond all calculation, worse than that of a man who has habituated himself to sobriety and constant labour. Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE observes, that “ of such force is the “ prevalence of habit, that the change “ from

“ from constant labour to constant ease,
 “ is as difficult and disagreeable, as from
 “ constant ease to constant labour ;”
 and I think I may from hence assert,
 that it would be better for the labourer,
 as well as for the state, that he should
 work six days for six shillings, than that
 he should receive the same sum for la-
 bouring four days, for both the labourer
 and his family would be made the hap-
 pier by it ; an habit of sobriety and in-
 dustry would be hereby acquired and
 confirmed ; and the man would natu-
 rally, and almost insensibly, become a
 better husband, a better father, a better
 member of society. Of what infinite
 consequence then is it to a trading state,
 that some method should be found out
 to enforce labour, and to procure habits
 of sobriety and industry among the ma-
 nufacturing populace.

But here it may not be amiss to ob-
 serve, that in relation to the labouring
 people

people working six days in the week; Mr. POSTLETHWAITE and I differ full as much, as about the operations of our taxes on the price of labour. What he has said in regard to both these arguments, I will give in his own words; but first in regard to labouring six days; the other in its order.

In page 14 of his first preliminary discourse, he says as follows; namely,

“ We cannot put an end to these few
“ observations, without noticing that
“ trite remark in the mouth of too
“ many, that if the industrious poor
“ can obtain enough to maintain them-
“ selves in five days, they will not work
“ the whole six. Whence they infer
“ the necessity of, even the necessaries
“ of life, being made dear by taxes, or
“ any other means, to compel the
“ working artisan and manufacturer to
“ labour the whole six days in the week
“ without ceasing. I must beg leave

“ to differ in sentiment from those great
 “ politicians, who contend for the per-
 “ petual slavery of the working people
 “ of this kingdom; they forget the vul-
 “ gar adage, all work and no play.
 “ Have not the English boasted of the
 “ ingenuity and dexterity of her work-
 “ ing artists and manufacturers, which
 “ have hitherto given credit and repu-
 “ tation to British wares in general?
 “ What has this been owing to? To
 “ nothing more, probably, than the
 “ relaxation of the working people in
 “ their own way. Were they obliged
 “ to toil the year round, the whole
 “ six days in the week, in a repetition
 “ of the same work, might it not blunt
 “ their ingenuity, and render them stu-
 “ pid, instead of alert and dexterous;
 “ and might not our workmen lose
 “ their reputation, instead of main-
 “ taining it by such eternal slavery?
 “ Have not all wise nations instituted
 D “ holidays,

“ holidays, sports, and pastimes for the
“ diversion of the mass of the people?
“ To what end? Certainly to give them
“ a fresh relish for their labour. And,
“ if they had not unbendings, we may
“ presume they would pine away, and
“ become enervated as well in body, as
“ marr'd in understanding, and what
“ sort of workmanship could we expect
“ from such hard-driven animals?

“ However, some London workmen
“ may, now and then, impair their
“ healths by drunkenness and debauchery; the bulk of the industrious
“ artisans and manufacturers throughout the kingdom do otherwise; and,
“ when they do make a holiday, they
“ will easily fetch the lost time up, as
“ they term it, in cases of piece-work;
“ and many of them will execute as
“ much work in four days, as a French-
“ man does in five or six. But, if Englishmen are to be eternal drudges,

“ ’tis to be feared they will degenerate
 “ below the Frenchmen. As our people
 “ are fam’d for bravery in war, do we
 “ not say that it is owing to good En-
 “ glish roast beef and pudding in their
 “ bellies, as well as our constitutional
 “ spirit of liberty? And why may not
 “ the superior ingenuity and dexterity
 “ of our artists and manufacturers, be
 “ owing to that freedom and liberty
 “ they enjoy to divert themselves in
 “ their own way; and, I hope, we shall
 “ never have them deprived of such
 “ privileges, and of that good living
 “ from whence their ingenuity, no less
 “ than their courage, may proceed.
 “ However, some regulations may be
 “ necessary, even for the diversions of
 “ the industrious poor.”

Had these observations proceeded from
 Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE’s pen alone, I
 should not have been so particular in my
 answer to them; for, the business of this

writer seems principally to have been that of writing largely, without much attending to correctness of style, or consistency of argument. But this, perhaps, was rather his misfortune than his fault; however, as his opinions have been adopted by other writers, and as they appear to arise from the tract, mentioned in the preface, viz. *Considerations on Taxes*, I think myself obliged to take this particular notice of them.

Whatever this great advocate for the labouring people might intend, it appears clearly to me, that his arguments must prove a snare to them, and leave them obnoxious to many evils, which constant employment would certainly preserve them from. It appears, to me, that constant employment is the road to rational happiness; which no one wishes more heartily for the poor to enjoy, than I do. I think I have proved that our manufacturing people
are,

are, in general, idle and debauched; and, in consequence of this disposition, both they and their families are unhappy, and the state in danger of being ruined by the loss of its foreign trade. I hope I have also proved that high taxes and dear provisions are so far from increasing this evil, that they are the most material check to it, as nothing but necessity will enforce labour, and necessity must be the basis of every scheme that shall be formed in order to redress this intolerable grievance, the idleness and debauchery of our manufacturing populace: and yet, I hope, I shall not from hence, be thought of so unbenevolent a disposition, as to desire to distress the poor; and, as Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE says, to make them slaves. I may be mistaken; but, I think that I am consulting the happiness of the far greater part of them, when I recommend constant moderate labour.

38 T H O U G H T S O N

I look upon the industrious poor to be the most useful part of the community; and, therefore, I wish them all to be industrious. It appears to me, that the riches, strength, and well being of the state, depends, in great measure, on the number of its industrious poor. I would willingly have them all live comfortably by their labour, and be supported comfortably by the state, when age, sickness, or any other calamities render them incapable of labour. The constant, reasonable labour of six days out of seven, when persons are in health, I am confident, would make the poor much happier than they are by labouring less, and having time on their hands for riot and debauchery. I would always wish to have necessaries at such a price, that, by six days labour, the poor might be able to maintain themselves and families in a plain, but decent manner. I am sorry that encourage-
ment

ment will not have the same effect on the manufacturing poor, as necessity. It is their well known disposition for idleness and debauchery that gives weight to my arguments; general industry would, at once, make them useless.

England, as a wise commercial state, which hath the power of extending its commerce, surely, should consider the vast sum that even one day's labour in a week, throughout all our manufactures, would amount to, and should endeavour, by a good police, to enforce it. It is judged by some, as hath been before observed, that it would produce above ten millions value of commodities per annum; an object, in my humble opinion, more worthy the serious consideration of the legislature, than all the grievances I have yet heard complained of.---But, to be a little more particular in my remarks upon Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE's observations---

He begins with noticing that trite remark in the mouth of too many, “ that
“ if the industrious poor can obtain
“ enough to maintain themselves in five
“ days, they will not work the whole
“ fix.” This author’s inattention must
be very amazing : who ever says this of
industrious poor ? surely this was never
in any one’s mouth but his own. We
know that industrious poor will labour
six days in a week, and that they seldom
keep any holiday besides Sunday,
which they enjoy in a decent and rational
way with their families. Mr.
POSTLETHWAYTE observes “ that those
“ who recommend the labour of six
“ days to the poor, contend for their
“ perpetual slavery.” He says, “ they
“ should eat good roast beef and pudding,
and keep holiday when they
“ please.” Indeed, our manufacturing
poor, in general, want no advice of this
sort ; they will do so, though their own
ruin

ruin and the ruin of the state should be the consequence of it. To prevent such ruin is, therefore, the business of the politician. If the making every seventh day an holiday is supposed to be of divine institution, as it implies the appropriating the other six days to labour, surely it will not be thought cruel to enforce it. Can it be cruel to prevent a man from doing himself and his family an injury? Surely no. Can it be cruel to enforce sobriety and industry, when, in the end, the poor will be starved without it? If, by the idleness of our manufacturing people, we are undersold in foreign markets, and the trade of the kingdom be lost, how are the poor then to be maintained, who are already so great a burthen on the lands? As to the taxes, which this author points out to be so great a burthen on the poor, that they cannot labour cheaper than they do, I just beg leave to observe,

serve, that a man pays more taxes in in two days of idleness and debauchery, than in four days of labour. If the poor will give up their superfluities, and pay taxes only on their necessities, they will fall very light, some think they would not amount to a thirty-sixth part of what they earn; whilst the Dutch manufacturers are supposed to pay six times as much in taxes, as ours need to do. And here it may not be amiss to take notice of Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE'S political arithmetic, in regard to the accumulation of our taxes, which he asserts are paid, sometimes five hundred, sometimes a thousand fold; "every one," he says, "charging, upon the article " he deals in, all the taxes paid by " every other tradesman he deals with." And thus he rings changes from the taylor to the butcher, the shoemaker, the tallow-chandler, &c. I agree with this writer, that where the state lays on
on

on a small tax, the dealers in those articles on which the tax is laid, will make a considerable profit upon such tax. Thus beer was raised an halfpenny a quart when the tax laid on was but a farthing; the same by glass, leather, &c. but the state is not chargeable with the exorbitant taxes that the people lay on one another; besides, taxes must operate the same in other states as they do in ours; and, therefore, I think the account may be made very short, and the query only be, whether, with all our accumulated taxes, the necessaries which the poor principally consume, or ought to consume, are dearer in England than in Holland and France? I am informed they are not; that is, that the articles which our poor consume, are dearer in these places than they are in England; but their poor consume but little of these high taxed commodities. For instance, wheat is sometimes

times very dear in France; and, I am informed, that, at such times, the poor eat very little bread, but content themselves with roots, &c. whilst our manufacturing people give out that they are starving, unless they can eat the finest bread, in as great quantities as when wheat is ever so cheap. The difference then does not so much lie in the taxes, as in the manner of living between our poor and theirs. If our poor will consume great quantities of those things which are heaviest taxed, surely they should work the harder for it; but if they will live luxuriously, and work only four days in a week, their labour must of course be dear, and we be undersold in foreign markets; by which means we shall lose our trade, the poor will want employment, and the lands not being able to support them, they must starve.

Some of my readers will wonder to

see me mention our poor living luxuriously. The term luxury has not, that I know of, been defined to any certainty; and what is called luxury in one man, may be parsimony in another: it depends, therefore, on the situation and circumstances of the consumers, and not upon the things consumed.--- However, I think it may be defined to be an indulgence in unnecessary things, which are too expensive for the situation and circumstances of the consumer. Indolence and ease are luxuries of the poor, which should not often be indulged, lest they grow into habit; for then they become fatal. Now all the taxes on the necessaries of the poor appear to be the more useful, as they operate to prevent this fatal indulgence, and therefore should be the last of all taxes to be abolished. MONTESQUIEU, in his Spirit of Laws, if I remember right, says, “ that luxury is necessary
“ in

“ in such a state as England, that it
“ cannot extend too widely among the
“ rich ; but that as it descends, it
“ should gradually diminish, till it ends
“ in a point among the poor.” Half
the taxes which the lower sort of people
in England pay, are for superfluities, or
the means of a low debauch, and not
for necessities.

When it is considered what luxuries
the manufacturing populace consume,
such as brandy, gin, tea, sugar, foreign
fruit, strong beer, printed linens, snuff,
tobacco, &c. &c. it is amazing any one
should be so weak as to conceive that
taxes raise the price of labour ; or that
it should be necessary to raise the price
of labour because of our taxes, in order
to enable the poor to live comfortably,
knowing they consume such heaps of
superfluities. I am informed, that in
one little manufacturing town in the
West of England, of about three thou-
sand

land inhabitants, excise is paid for two thousand hogsheads of strong beer, besides what is spent in spirituous liquors; all proofs of exorbitant wages. But, one of the fatal consequences of an high price of labour is, that it produces sloth. If a desire of luxuries produced industry, it might be useful, create trade, and improve the lands; hence all might consume more, and bear with equal facility higher taxes; but an hour's labour lost in a day is a prodigious injury to a commercial state.

In short, taxes are so far from injuring our foreign trade, by rendering our manufactures dear in foreign markets, as many writers would insinuate they do, that I am persuaded we should have no manufactures to export, if all taxes were entirely abolished; and if from other concurrent causes, our manufacturing poor could live at half the expence they have done for twenty years past.

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It is the quantity of labour, and not the price of it, that is determined by the price of provisions and other necessities: reduce the price of necessities very low, and of course you reduce the quantity of labour in proportion; put a stop to emulation and improvement, and our foreign trade, the source of our riches and our power, infinitely more valuable than mines of silver and gold, would soon be totally lost; our naval strength, which might be made the dread of the world, would dwindle into nothing; and we should even be unable to defend ourselves against the encroachments of our ambitious and restless neighbours.

Notwithstanding what Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE has said against our manufacturing people being obliged to labour six days in a week, I am confident that it would tend to make them and their families infinitely happier than the generality of them are at present.

In Holland, the people, in general, labour six days in a week ; by which means they have no time for riot, debauchery and expence ; and of course they are happy and useful members of society ; labour, by habit, becomes even agreeable and entertaining to them ; idleness, the parent of almost every vice, is banished the state ; and honesty, industry, and sobriety, take her place.--- One proof of this is, that in the great city of Amsterdam, not above four malefactors are capitally convicted in a year, and a beggar is hardly to be seen in the streets ; happy consequences these of high taxes, dearness of provisions, and a good police. Their laws relative to the poor, are wisely framed, and duly enforced. The great DE WITT, in his maxims of Holland, says, that “ High taxes promote invention, industry and frugality.” Mr. LOCKE, speaking of the frugality and industry

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of

of the Dutch, says, " that they would
" buy our rape-feed, make it into oil,
" and sell it cheaper than we could."
Such are the advantages of frugality and
industry to a state.

What a wretched contrast do the dissolute manners of our manufacturing populace make to the industrious poor of Holland ! Instead of that sobriety and industry which is habitual to them ; instead of chearfully labouring six days in the week, and thereby supporting themselves and families decently, as the Dutch do ; if our manufacturing people cannot earn enough in three or four days, to be idle and debauched the remainder of the week, they frequently enter into illegal combinations, destroy the works of those who are disposed to be industrious, turning regularity and order into riot and confusion, as hath lately been fatally experienced in Spital-Fields. Our manufacturing poor, instead

stead of being the strength and riches of the state, are become a burthen to it, almost too great for it to bear, our poor's rates being increased from about £700,000 to £2,500,000, per annum, within the last century.

These are real grievances, and, without a speedy redress, may prove the loss of our foreign trade, and the ruin of the state.

A luxurious, idle, and debauched manufacturing populace is certainly the greatest evil a commercial state can labour under, and, therefore, the first to be redressed; and, though those who stile themselves the supporters of our rights, should carry their favourite plan to its utmost height, unless a speedy reformation takes place among our manufacturing poor, unless some scheme be form'd to extirpate idleness, restrain excess and debauchery, prevent vagrancy, enforce industry, keep the poor

constantly employed, and ease the lands of the heavy burthen of poor rates, real liberty will still be very precarious, for liberty without property is merely chimerical.

The grievance mentioned above, and which I take the liberty most earnestly to recommend to the legislature of this kingdom for speedy redress, is not the offspring of opposition and prejudice; it is not the concern of any particular set of men only, but of the whole kingdom: those who are in the ministry, and those who are in the opposition; the present parliament, and any other that may be chosen; all must have an interest in putting a stop to the idleness and debauchery of our manufacturing populace. This is a many headed monster, which every one should oppose, because every one's property is endangered by it; nay, the riches, strength, and glory of this kingdom, must ever be insecure whilst this evil remains uncheck'd.

And yet, Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE says, that our manufacturing poor “ should
 “ not be expected to live like French-
 “ men, or Dutchmen; that they should
 “ eat roast beef and pudding, drink
 “ strong beer, and make holidays when-
 “ ever they please.” Alas! our poor, as I said above, want not such advice; too many of them do this already; and the consequences of it are severely felt: should it go farther, the trade of the state must be ruined. I readily agree, that where the labour of our people is harder, which is frequently the case, they should live somewhat different; for their spirits, exhausted by hard labour, must be recruited; but, in the common run of our woollen, cotton, or silk manufactures, the labour is no harder than in other states, and our poor would certainly be healthier and happier by leaving off spiritous liquors, at least, which tend to immediate intoxication, loss of

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reason,

reason, and brutality. Temperate living and constant employment is the direct road, for the poor, to rational happiness; and to riches and strength for the state. We cannot suppose that the lower sort of people have enlarged ideas of the social virtues, nor of the happiness attending the practice of them; but, surely, they can perceive that it must be right to make themselves and their families happy. Temperance and constant employment ensure this happiness; for whatever Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE, or any other writer may think of my scheme, I would always have it in the power of those poor, who labour six days, to have a small surplus, after their necessaries are paid for, to regale themselves and families with on the Sunday. Would this be like slavery? On the contray, would it not greatly increase the happiness of the labouring people, and the prosperity of the kingdom?

MAHOMET must be allowed to be, in many instances, a wise law-giver. He was convinced that every man ought to contribute his share of labour to the common stock; and, therefore, he enjoined it as a law, from which, even kings were not exempt, that a man should eat no more than the labour of his hands could purchase every day.

I hope I have said enough to make it appear that the moderate labour of six days in a week is no slavery. Our labouring people who are employed in husbandry do this, and, to all appearance, they are the happiest of all our labouring poor: but the Dutch do this in manufactories, and appear to be a very happy people. The French do so, when holidays do not intervene; and these, I am told, they frequently shorten, by the indulgence of the priest; the holidays which they keep are employ'd in religious exercises, at least,

what they think to be so, and not in riot and debauchery; one holiday made by a manufacturer in England, is of worse consequence to him, his family, and the state, than three kept in France, on account of religion.

But, our manufacturing populace have adopted a notion, that as Englishmen they enjoy a birthright privilege of being more free and independant than in any country in Europe. Now, this idea, as far as it may affect the bravery of our troops, may be of some use; but the less the manufacturing poor have of it, certainly the better for themselves and for the state. The labouring people should never think themselves independant of their superiors; for, if a proper subordination is not kept up, riot and confusion will take place of sobriety and order. The lower sort of people, who have little or nothing to lose, think every change may be in their favour,
and

and they readily follow the standard of sedition, hoping to get something in the general scramble. This, I fear, has been greatly encouraged by such writers, and perhaps, not a little, by persons who honour themselves with the title of patriotic members of certain societies. Liberty is the word they adopt; they wave it in air upon their banners; and the poor readily leave their employments, and follow it, to the ruin of themselves, their families, and the trade of the nation. This high-sounding word operates like magic on the unthinking multitude, and appears to them to sanctify any name that is joined with it. It is extremely dangerous to encourage mobs in a commercial state like ours, where, perhaps, seven parts out of eight of the whole, are people with little or no property. Every idea of an accession to what the populace call liberty, tends to make them the
more

more idle and debauched. Their ideas of liberty are the entering into illegal combinations, extorting money from the industrious, cutting work out of looms, and breaking windows, to the great terror and injury of the sober inhabitants.

The term liberty is very artfully adopted by the opposers of government in this kingdom, where the common people are zealous for it, even to enthusiasm; and in this, as it is in religion, the most ignorant are the greatest devotees; and, I doubt not, but many have been induced to sign petitions, from this high-sounding word alone. The lowest manufacturer, as I observed above, claims it as his birthright, and believes himself as much concerned in it as the nobleman, and therefore, readily joins in the general clamour.

The sobriety, frugality and industry of our manufacturing people, appear to me of such vast consequence, that the
well-

well-being, if not the very being of the state (that is, as a rich and powerful commercial state) depends upon some scheme being framed to promote, encourage, enforce, and make it habitual.

It is universally allowed, that labour is too dear in this kingdom: as to the principal cause of its being so, I differ from Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE, and many other writers on that subject. That taxes operate very little towards raising the price of labour in our manufacturies, I hope I have shewn already; but as it is a subject of great importance, I must not yet quit it, but proceed to shew, from experience, that the taxes on the necessaries, which the poor principally consume, never do raise the price of labour, but, on the contrary, that they naturally tend to create industry, produce a large quantity of labour, and of course, to lower it in a variety of ways, though not in its nominal price.

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The basis of my argument, I think, stands firm, notwithstanding all the opposition it hath met with; namely, that nothing but necessity will enforce labour and industry. A person must have a very imperfect knowledge of human nature, to suppose mankind will labour from any other motive. I would ask any man of common sense, whether he thinks the poor would labour at all, if they could gather all their necessaries from the next tree? Nay, whether they would even take the pains to climb that tree, provided they could get at their necessaries any easier way? This, though an argument from speculation only, appears to be very convincing: but we will now produce one from experience that cannot be denied; namely, whether wheat be at eight shillings a bushel, or at five, the nominal price of labour continues the same; but, being at such times of dearth, better performed, it becomes,

becomes, in fact, considerably cheaper; for master-manufacturers know, that there are various ways of rising and falling the price of labour, besides that of altering its nominal value.

It is just the same in France and Holland, where wheat is occasionally at five times its common price; a much greater difference than can ever happen in this kingdom, and falls much heavier on the poor labourer than all our taxes put together. If, in this instance, the price of labour kept pace with the price of provisions, it would destroy the trade at once. Holland and France, as well as England, would soon be underfold in foreign markets; but no such thing happens; labouring more and better, but not dearer, is the consequence of dear provisions.

The operations of Nature will ever be uniform, where they are not violently opposed. A love of ease and indolence,
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is not peculiar to any particular country. The French and the Dutch manufacturing poor, doubtless, once loved ease, as much as the English; but necessity first conquered it, and habit has made labour agreeable and entertaining to them. A Dutch manufacturer pays a much greater part of his income in taxes than an English one; and from hence, the frugality and industry of their poor is much greater than ours. However, I must here observe, that the laws of the Dutch, relative to the poor, are very good, wisely calculated, and duely enforced: they have operated so as to produce habits of industry among their poor. Would to God that we had such laws, and that they were to operate in the same manner!

As to the ingenuity and activity of our labouring people, I should not perhaps do them justice, if I did not say, they were more than equal to any people

in Europe. Could we by any means root out their habitual idleness, and plant in its room the seeds of habitual industry, frugality and constant labour, we should have no rivals in trade: the whole world would find it their interest to deal with us, and a tributary balance, if I may use the expression, would be paid us from almost all the nations of the earth. And this would be an infinitely more advantageous tribute, than if it arose from conquest. The nations who find it their interest to pay us an annual balance of trade, will live upon good terms with us; more especially those who are in a state of emulation and war, totally disregarding manufactures among themselves. They are glad to receive our manufactures, which they want, and will encourage a trade very advantageous to those who deal with them. This is the case with the tribes of Indians both in Africa and America.

America. The tribute of commerce is not a yoke which they are continually labouring to shake off, as is the case of conquered provinces.

After the Romans had conquered the greatest part of the known world, their immense tributes were the sole object of the Roman people; and having never cultivated manufactures and commerce to any considerable degree, the people, of course, had no employment, and, therefore, sunk into effeminacy, debauchery, and ruin, from which an extended commerce might have preserved them.

I hope the reader will excuse my deviating sometimes from the thread of my subject: I have done it here, in order to point out the superior advantages of trade and commerce, and to verify this maxim, viz. that any given sum received by a state as a ballance of trade, is better, and really enriches it more, than twice that sum, received as a tri-

bute from conquest; and this, also, serves to illustrate my first general proposition, viz: "that the riches of a state consist in the number of its labouring people, provided they are properly employed."

A state may have a great quantity of money in it without being powerful. Spain is an instance of this; for, no sooner had COLUMBUS brought vast quantities of gold and silver into Spain, but manufactures and agriculture were neglected, and the state became weaker, and of less consequence than before these acquisitions. But, if a state grows rich by foreign commerce, if her manufactures meet with ready sale abroad, employment is created for her poor, and her shipping, great quantities of money are brought into the state, and it grows rich in every sense of the word. Rich in money, in people, and, above all, in a powerful navy.

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My second general proposition was, that nothing but necessity could enforce labour; this, I hope, I have also fully proved from reason and experience.

My next business is to enquire what it is that enables the French to undersell us in foreign markets. And we find almost all writers agree in this point, viz. that the principal reason why the French are able to undersell us in foreign markets is, that labour is much cheaper in France than in England. Indeed, when we consider how much labour enters into the value of a commodity, that it frequently advances it from five to fifty times the first cost of the raw materials; we must readily own, that a small advance in the price of labour is of great consequence in the trade of a state. In some branches, labour advances the commodity to one thousand times the cost of the original material; for instance, the manufactures
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of flax into fine lace; nay, Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE tells us, “that the steel
 “spring which regulates a good watch
 “may sell at a price which makes the
 “proportion of the value of the steel to
 “the workmanship as 1 to 1,000,000.” But, calculations of this sort are the
 less useful, as every one who knows
 any thing of manufactures, will immediately perceive that the price of labour
 greatly affects the price of a commodity,
 and that the high price of labour in
 England has been the principal cause
 of the decline of our trade to Turkey,
 Spain, and Italy, in which states we
 have been underfold by the French.
 Indeed, the French have some other
 advantages over us, which I shall speak
 of in their order; and, by shewing what
 they have done to encourage foreign
 commerce, shall, at the same time, shew
 what we have neglected; but still, the
 difference in the price of labour is the

principal cause; and this, I am well assured by good judges, amounts, in in many branches of their manufactures, to above fifteen per cent. in the value of the commodity, and from fifty to eighty per cent. in the price of labour. If this be true, and I have no reason to doubt it, we need not search for any other cause of the decline of our trade with those states where the French are our potent rivals. If, in the article of labour, they can save fifteen per cent. on the value of the commodity, this will help to account for their being able to purchase our wool at a very dear rate, and yet sell their cloths, at a foreign market, cheaper than we can ours; but more of this, when I come to consider how these evils are, in some measure, to be remedied. For without this, and, unless some remedy be applied to this greatest of all evils, notwithstanding our present appearance of riches and grandeur,

grandeur, we must very soon become a weak and despicable people, without trade, and, of course, without a navy to defend us.

But, here it may be proper to observe, that as a reformation in the conduct of our manufacturing people is of the utmost consequence to the well-being of the state, so it is extremely difficult to be brought about, and requires the utmost attention and skill of the politician. A good police must be established, a good set of laws, relative to the employment of the poor, must be framed, and their execution be properly enforced, so that constant labour may grow into habit, and become as agreeable to our manufacturing people as it is to the French and Dutch : in short, the cure will not be perfect, till our manufacturing poor are contented to labour six days for the same sum which they now earn in four days ; for, this seems ne-

cessary to bring us upon a par with France. An author, who styles himself a Northamptonshire manufacturer, and whom I may again have occasion to mention, tells us, that “labour is one
 “third cheaper in France than in England; for their poor work hard, and
 “fare hard, as to their food and cloathing: their chief diet is bread, fruit,
 “herbs, roots, and dried fish; for they
 “very seldom eat flesh; and when
 “wheat is dear, they eat very little
 “bread.” To which may be added, that their drink is either water or other small liquors, so that they spend very little money, whilst many of our manufacturing poor spend half of what they earn, in strong beer and spirituous liquors.

As I observed above, these things are very difficult to be brought about; but they are not impracticable, since they have been effected both in France and
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in Holland : and what can be more worthy the attention of the legislature, than the framing of laws which would tend to make several millions of poor labouring people sober, industrious, frugal, temperate, virtuous, and happy, and the state, in consequence of this, the richest and most powerful in the world ?

A wise and good government will always remember, that the setting of bounds to idleness and debauchery, and preventing the encroachments of vice, among three or four millions of our poor at home, is a more noble and useful employment than the settling of the boundaries of our conquests abroad, and preventing the encroachments of foreign enemies. Could we but conquer the luxury, the idleness, and debauchery of our manufacturing populace, we should soon make it the interest of every part of the world to trade with us for

our manufactures ; and thereby contribute to our riches, our strength, and our glory ; which proceeding from this commercial source, must be ever increasing, and would be preferable to the most extended conquest.

But, here let us again observe, that a minister who would heartily engage in this arduous undertaking, should be totally unembarrassed by opposition. His mind should be sufficiently at ease for him to weigh, and consider the advantages, of every kind, which one trading state has over another, so that his commercial knowledge may be applied to, the service of his own country. For instance, when the price of labour between different states is the subject of enquiry, the terms made use of are, in general, vague and undetermined. The necessities of a family are vague ; what may be necessary in one, may not be necessary in another. The term family
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is vague; it may mean four, six, or ten persons. A day's labour is vague; it may be long or short. The different value of money, in different states, is another thing very necessary to be well understood. In one country, an ounce of silver will purchase a sack of wheat and twenty days labour; in another, but a bushel of wheat and five days labour. What a perplexity must arise from a consideration of all these things? Yet these, and many more, are necessary to be considered: but, to consider them effectually, a minister must be intelligent, unprejudiced, and an unbiassed searcher after truth. He must also have made trade and commerce his study, which very few great men have done. France has had her COLBERT, and England her HALLIFAX.

But a minister, thus nobly employed in giving honour, strength, riches, and permanence to the state, should have

no other difficulties to struggle with; nor should he ever be called off from this momentous business by the violence of opposition: for it cannot be expected but that every thing else must, in some measure, give place to his own security. From hence we may account for the similarity of measures which ministers pursue in this kingdom; for no sooner have those in the opposition carried their point, and are fixed at the helm, but they have the same kind of storm to struggle with, the same course to steer, and their principal attention is, naturally, fixed on the preservation of their own power. The pilot, over whom the waves are perpetually breaking, and whose whole skill is exerted to shun the rocks, can never be expected to think much about the damage of the cargo. But, from hence, I would not be understood to mean that all ministers are alike capable of managing the important

tant concerns of this kingdom: one may be wiser, more virtuous, and more patriotic than another: I would only infer, that a violent opposition will make them all think of their own security, and, in some measure, take off their attention from the business of the state. But farther, a violent opposition will sometimes incline a minister to countenance measures which, however just, he would otherwise have wished to avoid.

The principal grievance at present complained of, and which, like Moses's rod, seems to have eaten up all the rest, may probably be of this sort; and perhaps would never have existed, but from the apparently determined opposition to every measure of the ministry. But, it should not be supposed that every measure of a ministry is wrong, because it meets with opposition; for the most salutary measure will be opposed, and
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the ablest heads are then employed, either to misrepresent the measure itself, or the motive for adopting it; or else, the keenest and most virulent pens are set at work to attack their private characters, or, by any other means, to render them obnoxious to the censure of the populace. This is constantly done in opposition to the best measures of the ministry, by those who want to fill their places; but, if any measures are pursued, in consequence of a violent opposition, which can be strained, by the most consummate art, to appear like an attack upon public liberty, and that suits popular clamour, then it is held up to public view, the severest animadversions are made upon it, and the ministry are to be hunted down by the mob.

Opposition to those in power will always take place in this kingdom, from the great number of nobility and others,
who

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who think themselves qualified for, and equally entitled, to fill the high offices of government; and, whenever the common people can be brought to join in such opposition, they will grow very noisy, and sometimes very dangerous to liberty; while those who are concealed, secretly inflame the minds of the multitude, and sit smiling at the storm they have raised. Surely, it will not be supposed that even the most respectable names in the Society for the support of the Bill of Rights, are at the head of the present opposition; but rather, that they are led on by those who hope to fill the highest offices in the state. The nobility and great men of the kingdom, who keep this popular machine in motion, regard, principally, the romantic zeal of those they employ, without considering any other qualification. I wish their motives may be to support the cause of real liberty, and to preserve, unalterable,

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unalterable, our present happy constitution.

The French laugh at our enthusiastic ideas of liberty, and do all in their power to encourage our quarrels about it. They rejoice in our unhappy divisions, and will not fail, in due time, to take advantage of our weakness. Whereas, they would tremble to see our great men united, and seriously, and in good earnest setting about the redress of the grievance I have been complaining of; for this, by increasing our trade and lessening theirs, would secure to us a power too great for them to hope ever to overcome. The extension of our commerce, and the employment of our poor and our shipping, is, surely, the most important business of the statesman in this kingdom; compared with which, the foundation of the present opposition appears to be of little or no account.

I am sorry if I am too warm, but, I
own,

own, my indignation rises at a set of men, who, though we may, perhaps, be at the eve of a terrible war, would wish to have the parliament dissolved, the ministry changed, and every department of government thrown into confusion.

A noble lord, once regarded as the paladium of British liberty, lately as the idol of the mob, and now scarce regarded at all, solemnly asserted, some few weeks past, that a war was inevitable; nay, that hostilities had actually begun in a certain quarter of the world. From what motive this was asserted, I confess, the line of my understanding will not fathom. However, his boasted intelligence has failed him, and it has proved to be a false alarm: but, let us for a moment suppose it to be true, or even that he believed it to be true; by what name shall we call a man, who, at such a season, would wish to have the

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the parliament dissolved, and the nation thrown into a most violent ferment by the contests which would arise in the choice of another. Can the beginning of a war be a proper season to dissolve the parliament? I think I may add, can a true patriot desire to see his country in so unhappy a situation?

Unanimity was never more necessary in this kingdom than at present; instead of which, we appear to be in the unhappy state of a house divided against itself. England can never be conquered but by herself; and the sons of liberty, by their unhappy divisions, seem now in a way to give the last stab to their unhappy country.

And yet, I would willingly indulge the pleasing hope, that our present unhappy differences will soon be healed, and that a spirit of unity, candor, and true patriotism, will prevail throughout the kingdom; that the extension of our
trade

trade and commerce will appear to be the principal concern of all parties, and that a set of men, every way qualified for it, will fill the various departments of government.

I pretend not to any great knowledge in politics, farther than as commerce is a material branch of them: by carrying on a manufactory at some distance from the capital, I have gained some experience in the disposition and conduct of our manufacturing populace; and, one principal intention of this work is, to shew, in the strongest point of light, that such dispositions for idleness and debauchery, make labour much dearer in England, than in France or Holland, and are the most essential causes of the loss of our foreign trade to Turkey; Italy, and Spain. Other causes have been assigned for the difference of the price of labour between us and them; the principal of which is, the weight

of our national debt, and the accumulation of taxes on that account; but, I hope, I have shewn, in the course of this work, that our taxes operate very little towards raising the price of labour in this kingdom; and, howmuchsoever some people may clamour about the taxes on necessaries, experience proves, that an high price of labour, or a low price of necessaries, which amounts to the same, (for, whenever a man can purchase all his necessaries with a little labour; or, by labouring but part of his time, which is the case in this kingdom, then labour may, with great propriety, be said to be dear.) I say, experience proves, that whenever this is the case, idleness and debauchery will be the consequence: nay, it is so natural a consequence, that, I believe, a state cannot be named, in which sober industry hath prevailed, whilst the necessaries of life could be procured with
little

little labour; it amounts, almost, to a moral contradiction.

To confirm what I have here advanced, I shall produce the authorities of men, who have made these things their study, and the experience of states. Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE, in his discourse to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, says, "In order to advance the
 " trade of Ireland, provisions must be
 " rendered so dear, as to enforce general
 " industry." Sir WILLIAM PETTY, Sir JOSIAH CHILD, Mr. POLIXFEN, Mr. GEE, and others, have all concurred in the same observation; viz. that trade can never be greatly extended, where the necessaries of life are very cheap. A judicious author, to whom I am much obliged for many useful hints, says, in his Vindication of Commerce and the Arts, page 69, "The
 " reason why commerce seldom flourishes in a fertile country, thinly

“ peopled, is, because land being there
“ of small value, from the scarcity of
“ inhabitants, provisions are cheap and
“ plentiful, and labour dear.” To this let
us add, that all the states in the world,
which have made any considerable figure
in trade, have been such as have possessed
little land, and where the necessaries of
life have been dear, from the multitude
of people and smallness of territory;
such as Tyre, Sydon, Carthage, Athens,
Rhodes, Syracuse, Agrigentum, Venice,
, Holland, England, and the Hans
Towns.

Some have thought that it is on ac-
count of the dearth of provisions that
men quit their own country, and go to
others where they can live cheaper;
but this is not true; men very seldom
emigrate but from persecution, or want
of employment; take the words of the
judicious author quoted just above;
“ Commerce, supported by an equi-
“ table

“ table government, an equal taxation,
 “ a general toleration in religion, and
 “ a full security of person and property;
 “ these allure people, and naturaliza-
 “ tion, with open arms, receives them.
 “ When a state presents these blessings,
 “ the industrious, the indigent, the
 “ distressed, and persecuted fly to her
 “ for relief. They do not ask whether
 “ laughing Ceres pours her bounties
 “ over the fertile plains, or Flora
 “ decks the enamelled meads; but
 “ whether they can be assured of the
 “ enjoyments of the advantages speci-
 “ fied above; if so, thither people will
 “ flock; and soon convert the standing
 “ pool and lake into fat meadows, co-
 “ ver the barren rock with verdure,
 “ and make the desert smile with
 “ flowers.”

Surely, persons would never go to
 Holland in search of cheap provisions,
 for it is well known they are very dear

there; yet, Holland, as hath been said above, is the most populous state in Europe, in proportion to its extent of territory; but, this proceeds, principally, from the goodness of the Dutch laws, and the great encouragement they give foreigners to come and live among them; nay, they even admit them into their corporations and trading companies.

This, joined to the freedom of their ports, is giving trade and commerce every chance for improvement and extension that it can have, and tends to lower the price of labour in their manufactures. Indeed, through all the measures of the Dutch government, they never lose sight of their commerce, nor will they ever be taken off from this, their grand concern, by any party differences whatever. Were we but as attentive to trade as the Dutch, could we but introduce a spirit of industry among our manufacturing people, and
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be unanimous in promoting the real interest of the state, we should soon recover every branch of trade we have lost.

What a variety of blessings follow in thy train, O Industry! By thee our poor would be made happy, our riches would increase, more employment would be created for our shipping, our naval power would be extended, and our riches and power would secure to us the quiet possession of our properties, by enabling us to repel the united efforts of our encroaching enemies. By thy auspicious influence! we should be able to carry on a glorious war, or to make a safe and honourable peace.

By this time, I hope, enough hath been said to shew the principal cause of the decline of our trade to Turkey, Italy, and Spain, and that the French, principally from the sobriety, industry, and parsimony of their labouring poor, have been able to undersell us at these markets.

Their great minister, COLBERT, was truly sensible that an extended commerce was the first step to greatness, and the surest foundation of universal empire; and, God only knows to what heighth their trade and their power would have been carried, in the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, if the revocation of the edict of Nantz, a measure fatal to France, had not sent her manufacturing hands into England and Holland; and thereby bestowed on her rivals a great part of her strength and resources.

But although this was a terrible stroke to their trade, it did not ruin it; nor, indeed, were the advantages arising from this persecution made the most of by the English and the Dutch.

The foundation of their extensive trade was laid by this great commercial minister, pursued upon his plan; and, the trade of France is now again in a
way

way to rise upon the ruins of the English commerce, unless our legislature heartily and unanimously engage in framing laws, and enforcing their execution; such as will tend to introduce sobriety, industry, and constant employment among our manufacturing populace.

The difficulty of making laws to answer these important purposes is, certainly very great; many acts of parliament have been made, in various reigns, to enforce labour, and regulate its price. The heads of some of them I will copy here, to save my reader trouble, if he should be desirous of consulting them.

One of them says, It is enacted, That any persons who have no lands of their own, or who are not of some trade or mystery to get a livelihood, the churchwardens and overseers may set to work; and if they refuse, one justice may send them to the house of correction, and so
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he may those who refuse to work for reasonable wages.

Persons brought up in husbandry, or any of the arts, and not able to get a livelihood, if under thirty years of age, and having no visible means of maintaining themselves but by labour, may be warned, by two justices, to get a service, by a certain day; and if they neglect, or refuse to be hired for a year, they may be sent to the house of correction. 6 Eliz. c. 4.

One justice may put in the stocks, for two days and one night, such as he, in his discretion, shall think fit to work, and command so to do, in time of harvest. 3 Eliz. c. 4.

By an act of 5 Eliz. c. 4, The wages of artificers, labourers, and others, shall yearly be assessed by the sheriff of the county. And the justices of the peace, or the greatest part of them, resident in the county, have the same power, by statute

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Jac. 1, c. 6, in their sessions, every Easter, or within six weeks after.

This assessment, by stat. Eliz. must be certified under their hands and seals to the chancellor; who, thereupon, sends a proclamation to the sheriff, or chief officer, to be inrolled; but, in case no alteration be made in the rate of wages, no such proclamation is made.

By stat. 4 Eliz. c. 4, it is fixed how long labourers shall continue at work, viz. If they work by the day, or by the week, they must continue working from six in the morning till after seven at night, from the middle of March to the middle of September; and all the rest of the year from twilight to twilight; and, for the absence of every hour, more than those allowed for meals, &c. the master may stop one penny out of the wages.

By stat. 1 Anne, the wages, demands, frauds, and deceits of labourers in wool-

len, &c. are to be determined by any two justices of the peace, when the controversy doth arise, who may examine witnesses upon oath. But, there lies an appeal from the order of the two justices to the next quarter-sessions.

Persons giving greater wages than are hereby fixed, are liable to forfeit £5, and may be committed for ten days without bail.

These are the heads of a few of the laws of England relative to labour. But laws of this sort appear not to be so well calculated for our excellent form of government as for one more despotic. The lower sort of people in England, from a romantic notion of liberty, generally reject and oppose every thing that is forced upon them; and though, from a fear of punishment, you may oblige persons to labour certain hours for certain wages, you cannot oblige them to do their work properly. If they work
against

against their wills, they will flight their work, and our foreign trade may be hurt more that way than any other; for when once a trade is lost, through the imperfection of our manufactures, it is hardly ever recovered: the French are very careful in this particular, as I shall have occasion to shew by and by.

Although necessity must be the basis of any scheme to enforce general industry, yet, it appears from the notions and dispositions of a British populace, that it should not come so fully and so directly to the point, as it does in such acts of parliament; for the execution of such laws, have, almost always, produced illegal combinations, riot, and confusion. If possible, the effects of such laws should be produced, almost insensibly, and without the appearance of force; for force will hardly ever answer the end proposed in this land of liberty.

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We find that the manufacturing people readily submit to the necessity of labouring more for a maintenance, when, from a bad harvest, wheat is very dear. Something in this way, should a scheme operate upon them, or it will fail of its desired end. Taxes on the necessaries of the poor, operate something in this way, and are great incitements to labour and industry.

Indeed, whatever superficial enquirers may say, or howmuchsoever they may cavil about the effect of taxes on the price of labour in manufacturies; experience teaches us, that the Price of labour is no way affected by it, but the Quantity only; nay, we are certain that the necessaries of the manufacturing populace are not yet so dear as to enforce the moderate labour of six days in a week, as is the case in Holland and France. But writers, in the opposition, inform the manufacturing poor that
provisions

provisions are very dear, and that they are obliged to constant labour, “ which “ is a kind of slavery, and all this “ through the bad conduct of the ministers, and that they are crushed beneath the weight of taxes, occasioned “ by an enormous state debt; otherwise “ they might eat good roast beef, drink “ strong beer, and keep holiday when “ they pleased.” * Were such people silent, though the taxes on the necessities of the poor were double to what they are now, which is the case in Holland, they would perceive a general dearness of many of their necessities, without complaining, or being riotous; for the operation would affect them in the same manner, as an advance of wheat in a bad harvest.

But, as I am combating generally received opinions, and shall be thought, by many, to be very paradoxical, I dwell

* POSTLETHWAYTE.

the longer on this subject; and, being willing to search it to the bottom, I will now attempt to prove, that if our taxes were doubled on the necessaries of life, the manufacturing poor would have the least reason of any to complain. The weight of taxes and of dear provisions falls heaviest on the poorer sort of housekeepers, who carry on little trades, and on husbandmen, who but just live decent when provisions are at the cheapest rates, by their utmost industry and application; their powers are always upon the stretch, they cannot live cheaper than they do, nor work harder. But, this is far from being the case with the manufacturer, as, I hope, I shall make appear; and, in order to do so, let us, for calculation's sake, put all the necessaries of the poor under one denomination; for instance, call them all wheat, and suppose that a manufacturer, in order to support himself, must

must earn a bushel of wheat in a week; that the bushel of wheat shall cost five shillings, and that he earns a shilling a day by his labour; he then would be obliged to work five days only in a week. If the bushel of wheat should cost but four shillings, he would be obliged to work but four days; but, as wages in this kingdom are much higher, in proportion to the price of necessaries, than is here supposed, the manufacturer, who labours four days, has a surplus of money to live idle with the rest of the week. Now, let us suppose, that from a very bad harvest, wheat should rise to seven shillings a bushel; the only evil the manufacturer has to complain of, is, that he is obliged to work a day and a half, or two days, more in a week, and to be frugal and sober, like the Dutch manufacturer, or the English husbandman.

This evidently shews, that wages, in

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our manufacturies, are too high in this kingdom; that nothing but necessity will enforce labour, and produce habitual industry among our manufacturing populace.

If the price of labour was to be fixed by law, doubtless, the relation betwixt the price of labour and the price of provisions must be the basis of such law; and yet, it would be extremely difficult to determine what price labour must be at, in relation to any given price of provisions, in order to procure a comfortable support for the poor, as it would depend upon a variety of circumstances. An industrious man, with a family, would live comfortably by the moderate labour of six days in the week, though necessaries were taxed double to what they are now; this is the case in Holland. An idle and debauched man would be constantly poor, though single, notwithstanding all the taxes were abolished,

lished, and necessaries at half their present price. This has been, is now, and, I fear, ever will be the case in England, unless some method be found out to enforce labour, and make it, by constant use, habitual and entertaining. But these difficulties, instead of producing despair and indolence, should serve to animate a British legislature in these noble and interesting pursuits.

And now, as it proceeds from the love of my country, I hope I shall be excused for earnestly recommending the study of trade and commerce to our nobility and gentry; more especially to the rising generation, as the well-being of the state, and the value of their lands, depends on its improvement and extension; which I shall give an instance of presently; and, I think, I may venture to add, that the study of trade and commerce, with all their relations and dependencies, is full as necessary to the

being of the state, as the knowledge of the particular prerogatives of any branch of the legislature.-----There is more true glory in improving our manufactures, extending our trade, and thereby giving bread to millions, than can be gained by the most extensive conquests. If trade is the foundation of our riches and our power, when that is lost, what shall we have left worth contending for? The loss of our liberty would necessarily follow the loss of our trade.

That great patriot, Sir JOHN BARNARD, used frequently to lament, that commerce was so little understood by the generality of the members of either house of parliament; and once spoke to this effect, in the house of commons. "There cannot," said he, "be brought
"before the legislature of this king-
"dom, any subject more difficult in
"itself, more entangled with a mul-
"tiplicity of relations, or perplexed
"with

“ with a greater variety of circum-
 “ stances, than that of trade; in which,
 “ the most sagacious may deceive them-
 “ selves, and the most experienced,
 “ sometimes, disagree. There is no
 “ subject which so few gentlemen in
 “ our parliament have had opportu-
 “ nities of being acquainted with; and
 “ yet, no subject that requires so much
 “ experience before it can be tho-
 “ roughly understood.” To which I
 shall venture to add, that the impor-
 tance of it infinitely outweighs all these
 difficulties, with the true patriot, the
 sincere lover of his country.

It is a mistake, of infinite conse-
 quence, to suppose that there ever can
 be two distinct interests in this king-
 dom; namely, of land and trade; for
 they must go hand in hand, mutually
 support each other, and rise and fall
 together.

That an increase of trade increases

the value of land, I believe, very few will deny, but, that it has increased so much in value within the two last centuries, perhaps, few will believe; and, therefore, I copy here a calculation of Dr. DAVENANT, a person eminent for his extensive knowledge in things of this sort. He says, "In the year
 " 1600 the whole rental of England
 " did not exceed 6,000,000, and the
 " price of land was twelve years purchase. In 1688 the rental was
 " 14,000,000, and the price of land
 " eighteen years purchase; so that within
 " this period the land rose from seventy-two to two hundred and fifty-two millions." And here we may add, that its present value is supposed, by good judges, to be about seven hundred millions.

Surely, nothing can shew, in a stronger point of view, the vast importance of trade to the landed interest
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of this kingdom, than this great improvement in the value of lands. But if, from our present unhappy divisions, the legislature should be so inattentive to the commercial interest of the kingdom, as to suffer the French to gain our other branches of trade, as they have already done those of Turkey, Spain, and Italy, we should, in a very little time, have the value of lands sink in the same proportion, and we should become a weak and despicable people.

We are, at present, rich, powerful, respectable, and in such credit, that foreigners prefer our funds to any other in Europe; but, should our trade, the stream from whence these national blessings flow, be diverted to another channel, we should soon sink into poverty, weakness, and disrespect.

We have, already, lost many very valuable branches of trade, without sensibly feeling those losses, supported by

the immense trade which we have had with our American colonies ; but, other states have, and France in particular has, increased in riches and power, by our losses.

But, to return more immediately to my subject, which was to recommend the study of commerce to all those who now do, or who probably may, form a part of the British legislature---

There are some commercial maxims which are invariable, unless from a great change of circumstances: a few of these I shall here enumerate, as a knowledge of them will be a proper foundation for a more extended knowledge of the particular interests of states. It is extremely necessary for those who are employed in the important, and highly honourable offices of ambassadors to commercial states, that they should well understand all the various movements of this complicated machine, trade. It is
extremely

extremely necessary, that every lord of trade should perceive the force of these maxims, and be able to reason upon, and reduce them to political arithmetic.

These general maxims follow.

1. That the prosperity of the landed interest of any state depends upon foreign commerce.

2. That the increase of the riches of a state, depends upon exporting more in value of its native produce and manufactures, than is imported of manufactured commodities from other states.

3. That monopolies and exclusive charters are very prejudicial to the trade of a state, and, therefore, should be discouraged.

4. That the increase of trade and navigation greatly depends upon the increase of husbandry and agriculture.

5. That the prosperity of our trade depends very much on the encouragement given to our manufactures, on laws made relative thereto.

6. That the success of our trade greatly depends on the knowledge our nobility and gentry have of all its various movements, connections, and dependencies, in a national light, as ambassadors and senators, and, more particularly, on the wise regulation of our board of trade and plantations.

7. That the prosperity of our trade depends upon the judicious manner of laying and collecting our taxes, and upon the ease, readiness, freedom and cheapness of exportation.

8. That the prosperity of this nation, as well as that of her colonies, depends very much on the harmony, good understanding, mutual confidence, and upon the extension of their commerce with each other.

9. That the prosperity, strength, riches, and even the well-being of this kingdom, depends on our being able to sell our native produce and manufactures

tures as cheap, and as good in quality, in foreign markets, as any other commercial state.

The utility of these maxims, seems to appear upon the very face of them, so that they need very little paraphrase; but, as I have undertaken a work of this sort, I think myself obliged, with all due deference to persons of superior judgment, to speak to each of these maxims: but I purpose to enlarge upon the last, as all the rest will diminish in their usefulness; nay, perhaps, lose all their force, if this cannot be carried into practice.

By speaking particularly to these different maxims, I shall be able to introduce all that I intend to say more, on the important subject of trade; and, I hope, I shall appear to be more methodical in this latter, than in the former part of the work; in which, I fear, sometimes, my zeal, warmed with the

love of my country, has hurried me from my subject; at least, from that method, which I first intended to pursue.

Let my motive for writing be some excuse for accidental errors, of which I doubt not but many may be found in so complex a subject. I shall be glad, for the sake of my country, to have them exposed, and will kiss the rod that corrects me.

Having premised thus much, I shall now proceed to speak to the several trade maxims laid down above ; and,

1st, That the prosperity of the landed interest of any state, depends upon foreign commerce.

To this maxim, I think, I need not add to what I said above, where the immense advance in the value of lands, through the increase of our foreign trade, is shewn by calculation; and, likewise, that there cannot be two distinct interests in this kingdom ; viz. of

land and trade; indeed, they are so intimately and inseparably connected, that Mr. LOCKE, and many other great writers, have thought that it would be as well, or better, for the land to pay all our taxes at once; as they all come there, as to one common center, at last; for, by this means, say they, an immense expence of collecting would be saved to the state; and that it would, likewise, take away the foundation of the great accumulation of taxes, by the profit made upon them over and above the original tax, as hath been done in glass, leather, &c. in which articles a profit is made upon the tax laid on by government of above one hundred per cent.

2d, That the increase of the riches of a state, depends upon exporting more, in value, of its native produce and manufactures, than it imports of commodities from other states, more especially of manufactured commodities.

Very little need be said to prove the truth of this maxim; yet, it will require the study and attention of those who now do, or who probably may, make a part of the legislature, in order to distinguish what trades are profitable to us in this light, and what are otherwise; however, one very plain rule occurs, viz. every state which pays a balance in money to another state, trades with that state to a disadvantage, and should trade in that way as little as possible, and not at all, if the commodities imported from such states can be had from other states, who take our manufactures in return, unless it be for materials to carry on our manufactures; such as silk, cotton, &c. but, above all others, we should trade with our own colonies for every thing they can supply us with, even though, till they were come to perfection in these commodities, we should pay dearer for them,

or

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or even encourage the growth of them by bounty; but more of this when I come to speak to the eighth maxim.

3. That monopolies and exclusive charters are very prejudicial to the trade of a state; and, therefore, should be discouraged.

In speaking to this maxim, I shall partly copy from a very judicious author, who published an Essay on the Causes of the Decline of our Foreign Trade, printed for Brotherton in 1750, whose sentiments on this head correspond exactly with my own; though we differ totally in our opinions relative to the effects which taxes have on the price of labour.

In speaking of monopolies, this sensible writer observes, “that the Turkey,
“ East-India, and South-Sea Compa-
“ nies, with every other that has an
“ exclusive charter, prevent the in-
“ creasing the sale of our manufactures
“ abroad.

“ The Turkey company, whose trade
 “ is almost dwindled away, can pre-
 “ vent dispatching their ships for one
 “ year, if they please, to raise the price
 “ of silk at home for their own advan-
 “ tage, though the nation thereby loses
 “ one year’s vent, and consumption of
 “ its woollen goods in Turkey ; which,
 “ it is said, hath happened formerly ;
 “ and, if an iniquitous rise is given to
 “ silk here, we cannot manufacture it
 “ with such advantage as our neigh-
 “ bours. The reader will be pleased to
 “ consider the fine situation our poor
 “ employed in the woollen and silk
 “ manufactures must be in at such a
 “ time.”

It has, indeed, happened that the
 company’s ships for Turkey have been
 detained for more than a year, and even
 till there was hardly an English cloth
 left at Aleppo ; and, though complaints
 were made of this to the parliament,
 and

and the parliament remonstrated with the company upon it, they still delayed taking up their ships for several months longer, even though one of their own body had, if I remember right, fifty thousand pounds worth of cloth by him, ready to ship for that trade. This is one of the evils attending monopolies.

But, to return to our author, who goes on thus:---“ It is not the interest
 “ of the East-India company to en-
 “ crease the quantity of woollens they
 “ export; but rather to contract them
 “ (which, I suppose, was the reason for
 “ obliging them, by their charter, to
 “ export woollens to a certain value)
 “ for, at all markets, where there are
 “ any demands for goods, the small-
 “ ness of the quantities, naturally, en-
 “ hance the price; and, if the com-
 “ pany can gain as much on the sale of
 “ five thousand cloths, as on the sale
 “ of ten thousand, is it not their in-

I

“ tereft

" tereft to prefer the leffer quantity,
 " on account of the lefs difburfement
 " and risk? Though it is plain that
 " the nation would lofe the fale of one
 " half of the manufactures capable of
 " being vended; whereas private trad-
 " ers, pushing againft one another,
 " ftudy to increafe the vent of their
 " goods, by felling at moderate profits,
 " making the quantities answer to them-
 " felves and their country."

This argument muft be equally con-
 clufive againft all monopolies, and ap-
 pears to be an unanswerable objection
 to them, after a trade is once eftab-
 lished, and the original undertakers are
 amply paid for their expences and their
 risk. It has been a custom, in all ages,
 and with all commercial nations, to
 eftablifh companies of merchants, and
 to grant them certain privileges, as
 an encouragement to their eftablifhing
 trades with diftant nations, which are
 with

attended with great expence, risk, and uncertain profit.

Thus the English, in the reign of Queen ELIZABETH, in imitation of the Dutch, by combining the strength of the nation, renewed the example of merchant conquerors, afforded us by the Carthagenians; and thus far it appears to be the interest of the nation to grant exclusive charters; but, as soon as ever they come to be a disadvantage to the state, by lessening the vent for her manufactures, on account of the great profits they are tempted to take, having no competitors, then the trade should be immediately laid open.

This author further, says, “ The
 “ large charges the East-India and
 “ South-Sea companies are forced to
 “ be at for the salaries of directors, go-
 “ vernors, supercargoes, &c. make these
 “ companies neglect all trades that will
 “ not yield extraordinary profits; which

“ trades private merchants would be
“ glad of, and would turn to good ac-
“ count for themselves and their coun-
“ try.”

This author takes no notice of the Hudson's-Bay company, another monopoly very disadvantageous to this kingdom. The annual exports of this company, we are informed, do not, upon an average, exceed four thousand pounds, and they employ but two or three ships of one hundred and fifty, or two hundred tons each: very few people are employed there, and those are not permitted even to converse with the natives. Thus do they keep their trade a secret, and divide, sometimes, a thousand per cent; whilst, if this trade was laid open, three times the quantity of our manufactures would be exported, three times the ships and sailors employed, and the merchants well satisfied with their profits.

We are farther informed, that a very

extensive trade might be carried on northward of Churchill; but Captain DOBBS says, "The company avoid, all
 " they can, making discoveries to the
 " northward of Churchill, or extending
 " their trade that way, for fear they
 " should discover a passage to the western ocean of America, and tempt,
 " by that means, the rest of the English merchants to lay open their
 " trade, which they know they have
 " no legal right to; and which, if
 " the passage was found, would not
 " only animate the rest of the merchants to pursue the trade through
 " that passage, but also to find out the
 " great advantages that might be made
 " of the trade of the rivers and countries adjoining to the bay; by which
 " means they would lose their beloved
 " monopoly."

Much more might be said to shew the great extent to which this trade

might be carried, and the great advantage it would be to the kingdom to lay it open, as the last mentioned author has furnished us with a very copious account of most of the Indian nations that lie at the back of our northern colonies, with whom we might trade to a very great advantage. Take the authors own words. "How glorious," says he, "would it be for us, at the same time to civilize so many nations, and improve so large and spacious a country, by communicating our constitution and liberties, both civil and religious, to such numbers, whose happiness and pleasure would encrease, at the same time that an increase of wealth and power would be added to Britain!"

To this judicious gentleman's remarks, I take the liberty to add, that these Indian nations would, very probably, soon be brought to cloath them-

selves in the manufactures of Britain ;
by which a trade might be opened of
infinite extent ; and, surely, in our pre-
sent situation with our North American
colonies, whose extensive demand for
goods prevented our sensibly feeling
the decline of other very valuable
branches of trade, we should attempt
to open and extend every vein of com-
merce that promises any benefit to the
nation.

I hope enough has been said, to shew
the evils arising to a commercial state,
from the continuance of monopolies,
after they appear to cramp and lessen
it's trade.

But, to return to the author from
whom I have copied the first objection
to monopolies ; he says, " Another very
" injurious monopoly is, city and corpo-
" ration charters. Where freemen ex-
" clude, by charter, any of the same
" trade from settling in their towns ;

“ have they not a monopoly against
 “ the rest of the inhabitants? Cannot
 “ they impose extravagant prices for
 “ their goods on their customers, and
 “ do they not do it? If a journeyman,
 “ not being a freeman, gets into work
 “ in a city or town corporate, what an
 “ outcry is there not made of a fo-
 “ reigner being come among them, to
 “ eat the bread out of their mouths?

“ How! can a free-born Britain be
 “ reckoned a foreigner in any part of
 “ his own country? What an absurdity
 “ is here! yet, nevertheless, it is true
 “ in effect.”

I would farther ask, can one man
 eat the bread out of another's mouth,
 without being more industrious than
 he? Impossible! It must, therefore, be
 Idleness and Luxury they contend for,
 not for Bread. Strange policy this of
 of ours. The Dutch could teach us
 better; they admit even Jews into their
 trading

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trading societies and corporations, whilst we refuse our free-born brethren.

M A X I M IV.

That the increase of trade and navigation, greatly depends upon the increase of agriculture and husbandry.

At first sight here will appear another commercial paradox; viz. that the more corn we export the cheaper it is; yet, experience teaches us that it is true; and we find, that every year since a bounty has been given on the exportation of wheat, it has been growing cheaper; but, the reason of this is evident to every one who will attend to it; and arises from the great increase of tillage since this bounty was allowed; and this is one great advantage attending the exportation of corn, as shewn by a judicious author*, who says, "The admission of the exportation of grain, and the rendering it an object

* Vindication of Commerce and the Arts.

“ of commerce, is the best method
“ which can be pursued to prevent
“ scarcities from bad crops. If one
“ third of the land employed in til-
“ lage be cultivated for the use of
“ foreigners, and, at the same time,
“ one third of the crop should fail; by
“ a prohibition of the exportation, the
“ price would be kept down, and
“ enough would be left for our own
“ use to be purchased on easy terms.

It is amazing how much tillage is increased since the exportation of grain hath been encouraged by a bounty; which bounty, was it not for the great clamour made about it, would, I suppose, be extended yet a little farther, and be a means of yet increasing the exportation of corn, and of cultivating more of our waste lands, of which we have yet several millions of acres capable of producing very good corn.

But, to prevent this salutary measure, a very mistaken argument has been

made use of; viz. that by permitting the exportation of grain to a greater extent, the price would be so high at home, that it would raise the price of labour in our manufacturies, and injure other branches of our foreign trade. Here a double mistake arises from a superficial view of the case; whereas if experience was attended to, and surely there can be no safer guide, we should find, first, that an high price of corn never does raise the price of labour; and, secondly, as I said above, that wheat and other grain have constantly bore a lower price since the exportation of it was encouraged by a bounty, than it did before. This shews how little a superficial view of things is to be depended upon; and more especially things of this sort; in which, some very sensible writers appear to be misled; and, particularly, that judicious author, whose opinions I adopted in regard to monopolies,
who

who says, " For wages depending on
" the high or low price of provisions,
" the bounties on their exportation,
" serve only to feed foreigners, cheaper
" than our own people, to run away
" with our trade."

I am sorry to differ from this gentleman, but I cannot help pronouncing that this objection has no principle to support it; it is merely theoretical and void of experience; for first, as I said above, the high or low price of wheat never would affect the price of labour in manufactures, though the difference were ten times as much as could arise out of the bounty, which, at most, cannot be above one or two shillings a quarter; and should we forego the receiving several millions from France and Holland, because, by receiving it, their manufacturing people would buy wheat a shilling a bushel cheaper than ours could buy it? Indeed, if the
French

French are so much our enemies, that (tho' not very consistent with Christianity or even with humanity) in a political light, we ought to starve them; then if they had a famine among them, and could get bread no where else, we ought not to sell it them at any price: but that we should not sell them our wheat, because, otherwise, they would be obliged to give a shilling or two a quarter more for it to other countries, is one of the most absurd propositions I ever met with. This gentleman says, "Those that want our wheat will have it, without a bounty; those who do not, will not have it with one." But this argument is too loose and general. The difference of the bounty alone is sufficient to bring us a trade for corn; take off the bounty and we might have none of it; for even two shillings a quarter is sufficient to carry the market. However, upon the whole, I am very confident,

confident, that the price of labour in France has never varied on account of the price of wheat; for the difference to the manufacturing populace is only this; when wheat is cheap, they eat more of it; when dear, they eat less, or none at all, and content themselves with dry'd roots, &c. But before I have done with this maxim, I shall strengthen my own opinion, by copying from a tract entitled the Expediency of a free Exportation of Corn, published since the above was written, in which the author gives you the bounty paid in four different years on wheat alone: viz.

	Years.	Bounty.	Price.		
			l.	s.	d.
In	1746	99,388	1	19	0
	1748	202,637	1	17	0
	1749	228,566	1	16	0
	1750	325,405	1	12	6

where you see at one view, not only the sums paid in bounties, which, if we reckon at about one eighth part of the

price, must bring into the nation most amazing sums; but we also see, that when our exports were largest, wheat was at the lowest price. This sensible writer tells us in another tract, entitled *Farmers Letters*, that “the corn trade of Great Britain, has been one of the most valuable she ever possessed; that it has (since the bounty in 1688 was granted) brought near forty millions sterling into the kingdom, reckoning only to the year 1765;” which is less than fourscore years.

This being the case, it surely will remain to be the interest of Britain, to continue the bounty on the exportation of corn; by which means our lands will be farther improved, our shipping employed, and our riches most amazingly increased.

M A X I M V.

That the prosperity of our trade depends very much on the encourage-

ment given to manufacturers, and on the laws made relative thereto.

In the course of this work, I have already mentioned the vast attention paid to manufactures by the great COLBERT, in the reign of LEWIS the XIVth, and likewise by that prince himself, who would wear nothing that was not manufactured by his own subjects, and who prohibited the woollen manufactures of England.

It has been observed, and I believe with great truth, that whenever France has attempted to establish any new manufacture, it has spared no cost to encourage manufacturing hands to come and live there. A remarkable instance of this we find in Languedoc about the year 1675. The Sieur de VARENNE, having brought workmen from Holland, undertook to make cloth for the Levant trade, and established a very considerable manufactory; that of

CLERMONT

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CLERMONT and LODEVE followed soon after. The states of Languedoc lent them 130,000 livres for many years, without interest, and gave them besides, by way of bounty, a pistole for every piece of fine cloth made there.

It is remarkable that the meanest trade in France is under some wise regulation, and that the artists and manufacturers are laid under a necessity of excelling in their respective employments, and none are admitted to the freedom of their trading companies, without actually making a piece of goods, and being examined upon oath.

But, farther to shew the great encouragement given by the French to the woollen manufactories, I shall here mention what LEWIS the XIVth did at Abbeville. He lent one ROBAIS, a Dutchman, 40,000 livres, without interest, in order that he might establish a manufactory for superfine broad-cloths.

K

The

The king also erected him a spacious and commodious place to carry it on, and a fine house to live in, and granted him a patent for twenty years; and ROBAIS being a Protestant, LEWIS also granted him another patent, renewable every twenty years, for the free exercise of his religion, for himself, family, and all the people employed under him in this manufactory. The king himself wore some of the first cloth that was made, and ordered all his court to do the same; and we are informed, that all these privileges are maintained, to this day, inviolably, and that the manufactory is at this time carried on by three nephews to the old ROBAIS who first established it.

There are an hundred and eight broad looms employed in this place, and about six hundred persons, men, women and children.

All the employed are governed with great decorum and regularity. They

all come to work and leave it at the beat of a drum. If a workman gets fuddled, or commits any offences, he is suspended his work by the foreman of the branch to which he belongs; every branch being under the conduct of a distinct foreman, who disciplines the workmen, so as to make them excel in every branch of the whole; which is management worthy our notice.

It would be inconsistent with my plan, to insert here all the encouragements given by the French to their manufactories: I mention these to shew the great importance of well regulated manufactories to a commercial state; for the French poor not only live harder, and work cheaper, than the English, but great care is taken to carry their manufactures to the utmost perfection they are capable of, and particularly the woollen manufactures; which, considering the disadvantages

they labour under, in regard to wool, are now nearly equal to ours in goodness.

An author, who styles himself a Northamptonshire Manufacturer, tells us, " That at Lisle, and most other
 " places in France, the poor people
 " live very hard, their chief diet being
 " bread, fruit, herbs, roots and dried
 " fish; of flesh they eat very little, and,
 " when wheat is dear, very little bread."
 In another place he says, " The reason
 " why goods are to be bought cheaper
 " in France than in England, is, be-
 " cause the labour is above one third
 " cheaper there : " and he seems to add, as a reason for it, " for there the poor
 " people work hard and fare hard : " which is, indeed, the principal reason, whatever may be said about our national debt and taxes ; for these operate very little, compared with the different dispositions and manner of living between their manufacturing poor and ours.

And

And here it may be observed, that the encouragement given to improve the manufactures of France, is not given to the labouring poor; for those are obliged to “work hard and fare hard;” but principally to bring foreign workmen among them, and to establish new manufactures.

Indeed, the care taken in the manufacturing of stuffs of every kind, has been a means of increasing their trade in that branch. The keeping up to the lengths and breadths which they are marked, is very pleasing to foreigners, and is much attended to in France. I wish we were not so deficient in this article; but I am sorry to say, that the coarser stuffs, both of Norwich, Coventry, and Spital-Fields, are generally short of what they are called, both as to lengths and breadths; though Spital-Fields stuffs are not, in general, so deficient as those of Norwich and Coventry;

Coventry coarse tammies are the most faulty this way, of any manufacture of stuffs we have. The Norwich coarse camblets, which are called thirty-eight yards, run, in general, from thirty-seven to thirty-seven and a half; but the Coventry stuff, that is called yard-wide, and thirty yards long, measures, in general, but about three quarters of a yard in breadth, and about twenty-eight yards in length: however, I must add that the low priced stuffs, which are thus deficient in length and breadth, are principally for our home consumption, or are sent to our colonies, and sold at a price in proportion to their lengths and breadths; for when orders are given to these places for Spain, Italy, Portugal, Germany, &c. the manufacturers are very exact in the fulfilling their commissions. But the French being extremely nice in all these things, besides the great difference in the price of labour,

labour, and the expence of exportation, no wonder they gain our trade from us. I could bring many other instances of the encouragements, given by the French, to promote the sale of their manufactures, and to induce foreign manufacturers to teach them their trades; but I have said enough to shew of what high estimation and importance the French hold their foreign commerce, and that no expence nor difficulty, should deter us from pursuing every rational method, to render our manufactures as cheap in foreign markets as those of the French or Dutch.

In the infancy of the French woollen manufactures, they had every difficulty to surmount; but a sound policy and resolute perseverance conquered all. To shew this, I shall copy from POSTLETHWAYTE's Dictionary on Trade and Commerce.

Under the article Linen, he says,

K 4

“ When

“ When France first attempted the
“ establishment of the woollen manu-
“ factures, they had every difficulty to
“ struggle with, having neither the
“ materials nor manufacturers ; how-
“ ever, they were determined to sup-
“ ply themselves with woollen goods of
“ their own fabrication, and to put a
“ stop to the importation of English
“ woollens, in proportion as they ad-
“ vanced in their own ; and although,
“ at their first enterprize, their manu-
“ facture was but very indifferent, yet
“ as the king himself encouraged the
“ wear, the whole nation followed
“ the example. This laid the founda-
“ tion for their prosperity in this great
“ manufacture : after which they ex-
“ erted every politic art in the power
“ of human nature to suggest, in order
“ to imitate the English in that per-
“ fection, to which they had long be-
“ fore arrived. Thus the most skil-

“ ful and experienced manufacturers in
 “ England and Holland, were allured
 “ by honours and rewards irresistible ;
 “ and thus the ground-work was laid
 “ to vie with the English at foreign
 “ markets, in the staple manufacture of
 “ the kingdom. But as the reputation
 “ of the English woollen goods was
 “ established throughout the whole
 “ world, the difficulty lay in convinc-
 “ ing foreigners, that they had arrived
 “ at as great perfection, in this art, as
 “ the English; which they did by pro-
 “ pogating, that they had the English
 “ and Irish wool to work with, and
 “ English manufacturers to fabricate it;
 “ and what hinders, said the French,
 “ but we make goods in France equal
 “ in quality with those made in Eng-
 “ land ? But whether they have, even
 “ yet, arrived to the perfection of the
 “ English, is much to be doubted.
 “ However, they made their cloths

“ *Façon*

“ *Façon d’Angleterre* ; they imitated
 “ their lengths, breadths and thick-
 “ nefs, and counterfeited the English
 “ feals, and thereby craftily infinuated
 “ their woollen fabrics among foreign
 “ nations ; and, as they have been able
 “ to afford them cheaper, they have
 “ gradually made their way, and now
 “ share the woollen trade with us in
 “ all parts of the world.”

As I have now done with the general
 encouragements given to the woollen
 manufactory, I might go on to mention
 the particular encouragements given by
 the French to the trades of every par-
 ticular nation they deal with ; but as
 they are all much upon the fame prin-
 ciples, I fhall mention only the en-
 couragement given by them to the
 Turkey trade ; and I mention thefe
 things principally to fhew how much
 we fhould be upon our guard againft
 fo vigilant and infidious a rival in trade.

The

The munufactory of cloth, which I mentioned before, as eftablifhed at Languedoc, was intended purpofely for the Turkey trade, by that great minifter COLBERT; and at fo vaft an expence was it eftablifhed, that he expofed himfelf to censure by the meafure, though the event has fhewn the wifdom of his views. Thefe cloths are chiefly made of Spanifh wool; and, as I obferved before, there is a premium allowed by the public on every piece of this cloth. Befides this, there are feveral other eftablifhments (which are called royal manufactories) made at the expence of the public, or the province, where there are conveniencies for making a piece of cloth from the wool, to its being packed to put on board a fhip; and a clothier is put into one of thefe rent-free, on the fole condition of making a certain number of pieces of this cloth in a year.

These

These encouragements brought them a great number of manufacturing hands from Holland and England, which kept the wages and living of their own people very low; and, they are enabled to sell cloths to Turkey, those especially made of Spanish wool, cheaper than we can; for they take wool and money in return for their manufactures sent to Spain, and not those articles of luxury which we take, or, perhaps, we should have no trade with them at all; for the Spaniards take our manufactures at a dearer rate than they could buy from France, merely to encourage us to deal with them for commodities which the French do not want, and which the Dutch will not have on any account, it being inconsistent with their general frugality.

Add to all this, the lowness of their port duties, and the cheapness of their navigation, compared with ours, and
we

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we shall no longer wonder why they rival us in the Turkey trade. Besides, they have, by degrees, brought the Turks to like very thin cloths, such as we have not been accustomed to make; though, doubtless, we could make, if proper encouragement was given: which, it appears to me, can be done only by a bounty on exportation; for, the lowering the price of labour, I fear, will prove impracticable, in this generation at least.

But, in their second sort of cloth, we seem to have a remedy still in our power, and should ruin their whole trade in that sort, could we but prevent their having the English and Irish wool to work up with their own. The staple of their wool is short, and the wool weak, so that it will not endure the different processes necessary to compleat a substantial manufacture. But, they would still be worse in their stuff and
stocking

stocking trade, which is very extensive; for, they cannot make good hose but with a great part, or all, English or Irish wool. Their finest callamancoes and camblets are made of all Irish or English wool; so that their trade would be ruined, if we could prevent the smuggling of these wools to France, and could introduce industry, sobriety, and habitual labour among our manufacturing poor. These two points are of the utmost consequence to this nation, and well worthy the serious attention of the legislature; for upon their attainment, every valuable interest of this kingdom, in some measure, depends.

Many laws * have been made to prevent the smuggling of wool to France;

* See Stat. 11 Ed. 3, c. 3; 12 Car. 2, c. 32; 13 & 14 Car. 2, c. 18; 4 Geo. 1, c. 11; 5 Geo. 1, c. 11; 13 Geo. 1, c. 24; 15 Geo. 2, c. 27; and, 5 Geo. 3, c. 51.

but

but they have hitherto proved ineffectual; for the Irish can have no equivalent for their great profits this way, unless they are allowed to manufacture their wool, which the above-mentioned judicious author of the Causes of the Decline of our Foreign Trade, thinks it would be for the true interest of England to permit them to do. He argues thus :

“ By opening the woollen trade of
 “ Ireland, that of Britain will receive
 “ benefit (though the contrary is the
 “ common opinion) which I prove
 “ thus. Suppose one pack of Irish
 “ wool of six pounds value to make
 “ four cloths; that pack of wool being
 “ smuggled to France works up two
 “ packs of French wool, making altogether, twelve cloths.

“ A pack of Irish wool smuggled to
 “ France, hinders the sale of twelve
 “ English cloths: supposing them of

"circulation of - - - - £72

“ A pack of wool manufactured

" in Ireland can hinder the sale

“ but of four English cloths, at

“ six pounds each, and prevent

" the circulation but of - - -

“The difference is

“ It is computed that one third

" of what Ireland gets, centers

" here at last; which on the four

“ cloths, at six pounds each, is

"The benefit that England re-

" ceives by every pack of wool

“ manufactured in Ireland, in-

“ Instead of being run to France, is

"The wool of France," continues

this author, " is too coarse to manu-

“facture for exportation; but being

“ mixed with one third Irish, it makes

“ saleable cloth; every four cloths, ex-

“ported from Ireland as above, stops

“ the

“ the exportation of twelve French
 “ cloths : the foreign consumption is
 “ still the same, let who will supply
 “ the market. Ireland can export no
 “ more of our manufactures than it
 “ grows wool; for, were the English
 “ untaxed and unmonopolized, they
 “ would manufacture all their own
 “ wool. If twelve cloths are wanted
 “ at any market, and Ireland can sup-
 “ ply but four, and France, for want
 “ of Irish wool, not any, Britain must
 “ supply the remaining eight.”

I confess, here appears great plausi-
 bility in this gentleman's arguments;
 but, whether he has not carried them
 farther than they will well bear, I leave
 the judicious reader to determine.

Other writers have been of opinion,
 “ that England should take all the
 “ woollen manufactures of Ireland;
 “ and, that it might not injure our
 “ home consumption of woollens, they
 L “ should

“ should be taken with a duty, to be
“ drawn back on exportation.” But
this scheme would also have its difficulties, as the English purchasers, by keeping down the price, might still lay the Irish under a temptation to a clandestine exportation.

Others again, are for uniting Ireland to England, as Scotland is : but this, both the Irish and English seem averse to. I shall not venture to recommend either of these schemes; but hope every thing, from the wisdom of a British parliament, who will, doubtless, adopt some method to prevent this destructive practice of smuggling both English and Irish wool to France. As to the other, perhaps more important, article, the lowering the price of labour, by introducing and enforcing sobriety and habitual industry, I shall say no more here, as I purpose to speak largely thereon at the conclusion of this work,
and

and to throw in occasional hints as I go along. In the mean time I would recommend, that we discourage French manufactures, as they have done ours, and unite with the Dutch to preserve a ballance against them.

M A X I M VI.

That the success of our trade greatly depends upon the knowledge our nobility and gentry have, in a national light, of all its various movements, connections, and dependencies, as ambassadors and senators; and, more particularly, on the wise regulations of our board of trade.

It is well known, that since the establishment of the council of trade by LEWIS the Fourteenth, in the year 1700, the manufactures of France have been greatly improved, and its foreign commerce most amazingly extended; principally owing to the wise regulations

of that council, which consists of some of the principal officers of state, and twelve of the principal merchants of the kingdom: and these, from time to time, communicate to the royal council of the state, what passes in their council of commerce.

The twelve merchants who sit in this council, are deputies elected by the most considerable trading towns, and have a salary of about four hundred pounds sterling per annum. These deputies present to the royal council their memorials concerning every interesting branch of trade and commerce, with Turkey, Spain, England, Holland, and all their American, and other colonies: and the good effects of this council may be seen from the great encrease of the French trade to almost every part of the world; and, though we have many natural advantages over them, they are our most potent rivals in trade. Ever
since

since the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, the study of trade and commerce, and even the improvement of particular manufactures, has been deemed an honourable employment for the nobility of France. Some of our nobility have, likewise, perceived the great importance of a well regulated trade, to the riches and power of the kingdom. I wish this most interesting study had been more general, as it possibly might have prevented our present dilemma, in regard to our American colonies; of which I shall hereafter speak more fully. In the mean time, I hope that that most important department of government, the board of trade and plantations, may be filled with such as are well acquainted with the true interest of Britain, under all her foreign connections; and that neither France, nor any other state, will be able to boast a council better qualified than ours, for the ex-

tenfion of commerce and the increafe of naval power.

M A X I M VII.

That the prosperity of the trade of a ftate depends very much on the judicious manner of laying and collecting its taxes, and upon the eafe, readinefs, freedom, and cheapnefs of its exportation.

First, I would obferve, under this article, that taxes unequally laid, or that are rendered unequal by the manner of collecting them, muft be injurious to the trade of a ftate. Taxes which fall immediately upon manufactures, and become a part of their firft coft, muft be injurious to trade, becaufe thereby we may be underfold in foreign markets, and lofe our trade; fuch are thofe on oil, foap, dye-ftuffs, leather, foreign materials for manufactures, &c. Every tax, or duty that tends to im-

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pede the freedom, ease and cheapness of exportation, must be prejudicial to the trade of a commercial state. The Dutch export duty free, and the French have nearly followed their example. An author, whom I have more than once quoted, in his *Causes of the Decline of our Foreign Trade*, contends for having all our ports open to every one, and that no duty should be paid either on our exports or our imports; that one tax should be laid on the consumers of luxuries, and that all other taxes, excises, and customs, should be taken off. This plan follows, in his own words, page 78. “ It is hereby
 “ proposed, that all persons wearing or
 “ drinking the following articles of
 “ luxury, as particularly specified, be
 “ obliged to take out a licence yearly,
 “ paying each one subsidy for each ar-
 “ ticle of three halfpence in the pound
 “ only, on the computed income which

“ they should have, to support the sta-
 “ tion of life they voluntarily place
 “ themselves in, by the article of lux-
 “ ury they use, wear, or drink.”

Upon this principle our author sup-
 poses, that a nobleman who keeps two
 coaches and six, should be possessed of
 eight thousand pounds per annum, and
 upwards: however, he lays the tax on
 eight thousand pounds only; which,
 at three halfpence a pound, makes fifty
 pounds; and, in this sort of propor-
 tion, he taxes all those luxuries that
 are used, wore, or drank, by all the
 different sorts of people in this king-
 dom, even down to servants, and to in-
 comes of twenty-five pounds per an-
 num; and, here he stops, wisely judg-
 ing, that among the labouring people
 there should be no consumption of lux-
 uries. I own, with this gentleman,
 there should not be any, but, I think,
 I have clearly proved, in the foregoing
 pages,

pages, that there is a very great consumption of luxuries among the labouring poor of this kingdom; particularly among the manufacturing populace, by which they also consume their time, the most fatal of all their consumptions; a small part of which being idly spent, is a greater loss to them than can arise from all their taxes put together. From this source proceeds our high price of labour, and the loss of our foreign trade; and not from our taxes on the necessaries of the poor, or our national debt; as, I hope, has been, or will be, fully made appear in the course of this work. As I would willingly make this essay as extensively useful as possible, I readily copy from any author who appears, in his writing on this important subject, to deserve public notice; thereby drawing into one view the most material things said upon it; and, therefore, I would give this judicious gentleman's

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man's arguments all their weight, by copying them in his own words. After fixing the tax on each luxury he says,
" All articles of the same degree, or
" under the article paid for, are in-
" cluded in it.

" Husbands to pay for their wives
" the one fourth of the article they pay
" for themselves, to entitle them to
" use the same.

" Parents to pay for each child (un-
" der age) the one eighth of the article
" they pay for themselves.

" Batchelors, if of twenty-one years
" of age, to be double taxed."

This last article is extremely proper, otherwise the tax would be very unequal; and, indeed, as it now stands, the batchelor will not pay equal to the married man, who pays for his wife's and children's taxes as well as his own: besides, this would prove an encouragement to matrimony, and to an increase of population;

pulation; of which I shall speak again hereafter.

His next proposal is a very good one, viz. “No person keeping public-houses
“to have music, nine-pins, shuffle-
“boards, cock-pits, cards, draught-
“playing, dice, or any gaming in their
“houses, sheds, yards, gardens or
“grounds, for money or liquors, ex-
“cept they pay in the same manner
“as the persons using article IX;
“which is 3l. 2s. 6d. per annum.”

Was I to fix this tax upon public-houses, it should be high enough to amount to a prohibition; for these are great encouragers of idleness, great corruptors of the common people, servants, labourers and manufacturers, to the ruin of many poor families, the loss of our trade, and the vast increase of the poor's rates.

It has been objected to this scheme, that it would not raise money enough
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“ All articles of the same degree, or
“ under the article paid for, are included in it.

“ Husbands to pay for their wives
“ the one fourth of the article they pay
“ for themselves, to entitle them to
“ use the same.

“ Parents to pay for each child (under age) the one eighth of the article
“ they pay for themselves.

“ Bachelors, if of twenty-one years
“ of age, to be double taxed.”

This last article is extremely proper, otherwise the tax would be very unequal; and, indeed, as it now stands, the bachelor will not pay equal to the married man, who pays for his wife's and children's taxes as well as his own: besides, this would prove an encouragement to matrimony, and to an increase of population;

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to be an equivalent for the taking off all other taxes; and I do not wonder that this objection arises, as the author is not so explicit, on this head, as I could wish; I shall, therefore, take the liberty of explaining, what appears to me to be his intent and meaning. And first, he hints pretty clearly, that the taxes are not to be taken off all at once, but by degrees, for the new tax must, at first, be very uncertain as to its amount; and a few years experience will be necessary to determine it nearly, but never exactly, as it will ever be fluctuating. Secondly, I apprehend he means, that though he mentions the payment of one subsidy only for each luxury, yet that, on any emergency, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 subsidies may be raised; so that instead of eight thousand pounds a year paying only one subsidy of fifty pounds per annum, it may be called on for 400l. per annum, and even this would not be thought hard,

hard, because it would fall far short of the land-tax only, now paid by such an estate; besides, every thing else to be purchased cheaper from the taxes being taken off. And, if eight subsidies were to be raised on the master of the family, for his wife, for his children, and the double tax of batchelors, it would either produce a great deal of economy or a great of money, though, perhaps, at last, not equal to all our taxes; and therefore, some of those, the least burthensome, might remain, or more subsidies must be paid.

In the next place, this author furnishes the method for raising this tax: but as it takes up several pages, I must refer my reader to the book itself.

Our author then goes on to shew the equality of this tax, and that there could be no objection to it. He says, “ All
 “ persons tax themselves voluntarily,
 “ than which nothing can be easier or
 “ more

“ more equal ; and an equal easy way
 “ of raising taxes will always produce
 “ the most money and the fewest mur-
 “ murs. Those that would abate of
 “ their taxes may abate of their luxury,
 “ as those that won't pay for a licence
 “ to keep a coach and fix horses, may
 “ keep only four, or a pair, or need
 “ not keep any, nor drink wine, tea,
 “ brandy, &c. nor wear jewels, nor
 “ use plate, and not pay any thing ; so
 “ that no individual can be oppressed.”

It may not be amiss to mention here,
 that the Dutch seem to think it of more
 use to tax the consumption of the poor,
 than the luxuries of the rich, as if they
 thought that cheap living would prove a
 check to industry.

The author then proceeds to shew
 the advantage that such a tax on luxuries
 would produce ; first to the land-
 holder, next to the stockholder, and
 then to the trade in general. I can
 follow

follow him chearfully through the two first articles, and allow the force of his arguments; but I must quit him, or, rather, he quits me, when he says, “ The poor will have more constant
“ employment, as they will be able to
“ work cheaper.

I know it is a maxim (though a false one) with all the writers on that side of the question, that no sooner are necessities cheap, but labour is so likewise. The very reverse of this appears, from experience, to be true. But here it may be necessary to make an observation on the relative terms Dear and Cheap, which I shall do in the words of the judicious author of the Vindication of Commerce and the Arts. “ When a
“ man,” says he, “ can purchase all his
“ necessities with a little labour, we
“ say they are Cheap; when it requires
“ a great deal of labour to provide
“ them, we say they are Dear. Now,
2 “ if

“ if we look back to our histories of
 “ ancient times, when wheat was, in
 “ common, about two shillings a quar-
 “ ter, we find labour so high, that two
 “ days work would purchase a bushel
 “ of wheat in common.”

Is not this an argument, from experience, directly contrary to the above maxim? But superficial and theoretical enquirers never see these things in a true light: they skim the surface, and catch the bubble only; experience alone produces solid and irresistible argument. I have asserted it before in this work, and I assert it here again, that labour continues the same in England when wheat is at ten shillings a bushel, as it does when it is at two shillings and sixpence; and, I believe, in other countries, the price of wheat as little governs the price of labour. If we expect that by lowering the price of provisions, we shall either lower the price of labour,

or

or encrease its quantity, we shall find ourselves egregiously mistaken. The price of it would remain much the same, but the quantity be greatly lessened. But, for argument's sake, let us suppose, that an increase of our taxes should raise the price of necessaries two-pence a day to the poor manufacturer; the utmost evil that could arise from thence, supposing there was sufficient employment, would be, that he must work one or two hours a day, or one day in a week more, for his subsistence, or for the same means of a low debauch; which he now indulges in: for, by working this hour or two extraordinary, he would be capable of purchasing as many necessaries and superfluities as he could do before this increase of taxes. Would this increase of taxes then be an evil so greatly to be dreaded? Surely no.

Upon the same mistaken principles our national debt has, for many years

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past,

past, been deemed the source of inevitable ruin to the state. It has been said, that a debt of thirty millions would raise the price of labour so high in our manufactures, as to ruin our foreign trade. The state became thirty millions in debt, and our exports increased. But not to enumerate all the prophecies of politicians in the different stages of our national debt, it has also been confidently asserted, that a debt of one hundred millions would produce a weight of taxes, which would make provisions so dear, and raise the price of labour so high, that it would entirely crush our foreign trade, and bankrupt the nation. These politicians have also been proved false prophets; for with a state debt of one hundred and fifty millions, we preserve our credit and our influence; and, if we should not continue so to do, some other cause may be assigned besides the national debt.

The

The debt of Holland is greater, in proportion, than ours, and her taxes much higher: yet, from the goodness of her police, the sobriety, frugality, and habitual industry of her labouring people, it is the richest, and most populous country in Europe, in proportion to its extent of territory, and the center of all European exchanges.

If an heavy state debt could have ruined the Dutch, they would have been ruined an hundred years ago: instead of which, they carry on an immense trade, are a very great and powerful people, and our potent rivals in many branches of commerce.

The writers on this subject did not consider, when they made their calculations, that an increasing foreign trade might bring so much money into the state, and so alter the value of lands and every thing else, that a debt of 150,000,000, at this day, might be as

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easily

easily borne as a debt of 20,000,000 when the calculations abovementioned were made. So, if our trade, for one hundred and fifty years to come, were to increase in the same proportion that it has done for one hundred and fifty years past, and bring so much real riches into this kingdom, as, at any time, to be capable of absorbing all our paper circulation, the state might bear the weight of 100,000,000 more, without fear of bankruptcy.

But the great Mr. LOCKE, and other politicians, both before and since his time, judged that our foreign trade could not extend itself, oppressed with the taxes, which such debt would naturally produce; and, therefore, they never once thought that an increase of riches had a tendency to increase the national debt, but the very reverse. However, it has most certainly done so, both here and in Holland, by making
it

it extremely easy for the government, on any emergency, to borrow money at a low rate of interest. Another mistaken notion has prevailed; namely, that our taxes raise the price of provisions, and all other necessaries; when, in fact, this rise proceeds merely from the great increase of money in this kingdom; which raises the price of every other thing, whilst it proportionably sinks its own value.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, notwithstanding I am confident that our national debt operates but very little towards the raising the price of labour in our manufacturies, which is the grand thing complained of; notwithstanding, I am convinced, that our present state debt is not fraught with those pernicious consequences which many would have us believe, or that we are in a state of bankruptcy, or in any way to be tempted unfairly to wipe it all off; for

this cannot happen but as an unhappy consequence of our unhappy divisions; yet, I would have no one suppose, that I think it a desirable thing to have this kingdom 150,000,000 in debt; it being clear that part of the consequences of such debt must fall on our foreign commerce.

One great evil complained of, and which I wish could be remedied, is the large sum annually paid to foreigners for interest, amounting, it is said, to a million and a half per annum. Suppose it less, there is no doubt but that it would be for the good of the nation to reduce it still lower, whenever the exigencies of government will admit of it; and, to take off all those taxes which more immediately fall on our manufactures, make a part of their cost, and render them dear abroad; and, likewise, in imitation of the Dutch, to lower our port duties; for this has been one principal

principal source of their extensive commerce, and would have the same desirable effect in this kingdom, acting as a balance against those taxes which fall on the materials for our manufactures.

It has never been said, at least I have never heard that it has, that the state debt of the Dutch hath at all lessened their foreign trade; nor that their trade has been at all injured by the great weight of taxes which fall on the immediate consumption of their poor: on the contrary, those taxes are thought useful, by promoting industry, sobriety, and economy.

But, to shew how little reason we have to complain of our taxes, let us hear what that great statesman, Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE, says, in his Observations on the United Provinces.

He tells us, in general, " That they
" are oppressed with the most cruel

“ hardships and variety of taxes that
 “ were ever known under any govern-
 “ ment; that the excise, upon all com-
 “ modities, is so great and general,
 “ that he hath heard it observed, at
 “ Amsterdam, that when, in a tavern,
 “ a certain dish of fish is eaten, with
 “ the usual sauce, above thirty excises
 “ are paid for what is necessary to that
 “ small service. In short, they pay ex-
 “ cise for every thing they eat, drink,
 “ use, or enjoy.”

The impost upon all bread-corn,
 ground in the mills of Holland, which
 every body pays, without exception,
 amounts to the prime cost of the corn.
 The excise on beer is as follows; first,
 the brewer pays twelve-pence a barrel;
 private families pay twenty-pence more;
 and victuallers, or retailers, pay another
 twenty-pence. Butter pays six shillings
 a barrel; tobacco, ten-pence a pound;
 fish, twenty-pence a pannier; and soap
 eleven

eleven shillings a barrel. Every horse, above three years old, pays two-pence a month; every horned beast, above that age, three-pence; every coach pays ten shillings a year, and every little bark twenty-pence. All cattle, sheep, or hogs, pay one penny in seven of the money they are sold for. All wood made use of for fuel pays an eighth part of what it cost. Every master pays twenty-pence a head, yearly, for each servant in his family, male or female. Household furniture pays a ninth part, and woollen cloths a fourth part of their value. In one word, the Dutch pay excise for every thing. There is not a turf, or log of wood, in their chimneys, not an herb, or onion, in their gardens, but what pays a duty, more or less, to the states. Our author assures us, that a cow of nine years old, if it be sold for five pounds, will pay six pounds to the states. Let any one
who

who supposes that high taxes raise the price of labour, look over the above catalogue, and tell me what price labour must be at in Holland in proportion to such taxes? And yet, after all, labour is cheaper there than in England. Is not this a proof, even to demonstration, that taxes have not that effect on labour which they are generally supposed to have? If, as I have said before, labour was to rise in Holland, in proportion to the taxes, it would destroy itself, i. e. there would be no trade, and of course no labour.

We see that their taxes fall, like ours, on the necessaries of the poor, only much heavier; and yet, their sobriety, frugality, and habitual industry, carry them through, without murmuring. Labour, by habit, is certainly more agreeable to them than idleness; and, so different are the dispositions of their labouring poor from ours, that if all
their

their taxes were taken off, they would not work less, but would then save money, which some think a good reason for their continuance. Whilst ours, I am sorry to say it, would work less and debauch more; and I fear this will ever be the case, unless some method can be found out to make labour habitual and entertaining.

Indeed, the force of habit, and the salutary effect of good habits, may be clearly seen, by comparing two sorts of our labouring people, namely, those employed in manufactures, and those employed in the cultivation of lands. Our husbandmen generally labour cheerfully six days in the week, are sober, frugal and industrious, and the good effects of their sobriety and economy appear in every thing about them. Their cottages are clean, and furnished with almost every necessary. Their families are decently cloathed, and their
frugal

frugal repast is served up with neatness and decorum. But in the cottages of manufacturers, you see the very reverse of all this; rags, nastiness, and a want of almost every necessary.

Now, from this impartial description of these two different kind of poor labourers, any one would naturally suppose, that the husbandman earned eight or nine shillings a week, and the manufacturer but four or five: instead of which, the husbandman earns no more than five or six shillings a week, by the hard labour of six days; whilst the manufacturer earns from six to ten shillings in four days, and has from such high wages the power of spending the rest of the week in idleness and debauchery.

But, it has been urged, to make the comparison less odious, that the husbandman has a great advantage over the manufacturer, from his being able to keep poultry, pigs, and sometimes

times a cow, upon the waste; and that his little garden supplies him and his family with roots, herbs, &c. Helps which few manufacturers can have.

I allow, that where the husbandman enjoys all these, it is a great help to him, and may be equal to the great wages of the manufacturers. However, many husbandmen enjoy these advantages but in a small degree, and, if they chance to live in a part of the kingdom where the woollen manufactory is not diffused, the wife and family can get little or nothing, whilst every child in the family of a manufacturer of cloth, stuff, silk, cotton, and such like, can earn its living at five years of age; so that the difference in the behaviour and manner of living of these two sorts of labouring people, appears to arise from custom and habit, more than from any advantage or disadvantage peculiar to their situation.

As

As a proof of this, the manufacturer and his family in Holland are as decent, cleanly, frugal, industrious and happy, as the husbandman and his family are in England: and here it may be remarked, that the constant attendance at church, on the sabbath-day, which is practised by the country people in general, tends very much to produce that kind of decency and sobriety, which distinguishes the husbandman from the manufacturer. I am informed that the clergy in Holland make a point of recommending sobriety and good order among the labouring people, and that the advantages arising from it, are frequently inculcated from the pulpit; and as the manufacturing people go as constantly to church on Sunday in Holland, as the husbandmen do here; this care of the clergy may have had a very good effect on their conduct. However it be, it is certain that the labouring

ing poor in Holland bear their heavy load of taxes without repining. They know that they cannot live but by working six days in the week; and they submit to it chearfully. But industry and parsimony are not habits of the labouring people only; they are universally the taste of the Dutch. A burgher of Amsterdam will dine contentedly on a red herring; when a citizen of London, of the same condition, will not sit down to table without several dishes. SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE tells us, “ That it is a common rule
 “ among them, for every man to spend
 “ less than he has coming in, be that
 “ what it will; and that if a man’s
 “ expence equals his revenues, it dis-
 “ credits him, among them, as much,
 “ as any vicious or profligate extrava-
 “ gance does in other countries; so that
 “ frugality is honourable among them.”
 The same author tells us, “ That he
 “ never

“ never saw the two greatest officers
 “ belonging to the state, the Vice Ad-
 “ miral DE RUYTER, and Pensioner
 “ DE WIT, with above one servant
 “ each, in their train, but most usually
 “ on foot and alone, in the streets, like
 “ common burghers.” The rule for
 a man to spend less than his income
 is worthy to be adopted every where;
 but whether parsimony be a virtue in
 people who are very rich, and fill the
 highest offices in the state, is with me
 a doubt, unless the influence of their
 example, gradually extending itself to
 the lowest orders of the people, which
 is probably the case, may that way have
 its use; for though MONTESQUIEU
 allows that luxury among the great
 should be encouraged in a trading state,
 yet the poor, he says, cannot be too par-
 monious. It is by this general, univer-
 sal frugality, that the Dutch grow rich,
 under the pressure of so many taxes.

But here it is very natural to enquire how the Dutch can support and extend their foreign trade, burthened with such taxes; whilst the foreign trade of England is said to decline from the very same cause? To which I would answer, that the grand inconvenience arising, as is supposed, from high taxes, namely the high price of labour, has no foundation in truth. Labour in Holland is now cheaper than in England, though the former is taxed much higher; therefore taxes do not raise the price of labour in Holland. This is an answer to the above question, in part. But it may still be asked, how they relieve their exported commodities from the taxes which must fall on them in one shape or another? To which it may be readily answered, by their exports and imports being, in general, free from all duties and customs, which proves a kind of political ballance against their weight of other taxes.

The author of an Essay on the Causes of the Decline of our Foreign Trade, already quoted several times in this work, enumerates the great advantages arising to the trade of a country, from the freedom of its ports, and hints that it is a remedy which the Dutch make use of to relieve their foreign trade from the burthen of their taxes; at the same time recommending it to England to follow their example, which the French have already done, in almost every article of their commerce.

This author says, "First, that it will increase trade, by increasing the number of merchants; as small capitals will serve, where there are no customs to pay.

"Secondly, By making our country an universal store-house; for when our merchants have no customs to advance, they will frequently import upon speculation."

Indeed,

Indeed, we have a partial remedy for this ; viz. giving bond to the government for the exportation, and thereby gaining credit for the customs : but then the goods must be put into the possession of an officer of the customs, which is attended with inconvenience, is a clog upon the sale of the goods, and therefore is far from a complete remedy.

“ Thirdly, By increasing our navigation, by the vast quantities of goods continually going out and coming in.

“ Fourthly, By putting all traders upon the same footing, it would prevent smuggling.

“ Fifthly, By gaining us the herring fishery ; for the Dutch having liberty to sell their fish on the coast of England, would snap at such a market, and some of them be inclined to settle among us.”

This last mentioned consequence

would prove an happy one indeed ; for I know not a greater advantage that could arise to England, than the having a number of Dutchmen coming to live among us, and exercising all their various employments, with that sobriety and habitual industry, which they practice in their own country : nothing could be so likely to work a reformation on our idle and debauched manufacturing populace, as such examples : this would produce a kind of necessity, without which, nothing will enforce industry in this kingdom.

The reasons which this author gives, why the Dutch would probably settle among us, or at least many of them, if our ports were open to them for the sale of their herrings, is, “ that otherwise they
“ must make two expensive hazardous
“ voyages, one back to Holland to cure
“ and pack the fish, and the other from
“ thence to the coasts of Britain to sell
“ them.”

“ Sixthly, That it will employ our
 “ poor; for necessaries and materials
 “ being, by a free-port trade, and the
 “ reduction of taxes, rendered cheap,
 “ labour must be so too, and the vent
 “ of our goods be enlarged.”

Here our author again supposes what, probably, will not happen; nay, what experience teaches us never did happen; viz. that taking off our taxes would lower the price of labour. Indeed, the mention of taxes here seems foreign to his purpose, where he is shewing, in the strongest light he is able, the advantages of a free port. It would have been more to his purpose to have urged, and to have brought the high-taxed Hollanders for an instance of it, that the advantages of a free port would be a ballance against our heavy weight of taxes, as it is in Holland, whose taxes are much heavier than ours; more especially, as he goes on to say, that,

N 3

“ Holland

“ Holland is an example of this, whose
 “ customs are so low, that their trade
 “ is almost free, and there is no coun-
 “ try in the world where the poor are
 “ so well employed, or in sickness bet-
 “ ter provided for.” And here I beg
 leave to remark, that it is not the taxes
 on the necessaries of life which the
 Dutch complain of as an evil, or en-
 deavour to remedy by free ports; but
 as a ballance to all other taxes, which
 are a burthen to their trade, they make
 their ports free. So far are they from
 complaining of the ill consequences
 arising from the taxes on the necessaries
 of life, that the great DE WIT says,
 in his Maxims of Holland, “ High
 “ taxes promote invention, industry
 “ and frugality.”

M A X I M VIII.

That the prosperity of this nation,
 as well as that of her colonies, depends
 very

very much on their harmony, mutual confidence, and on the increase of their commerce with each other.

I enter with the more timidity on the discussion of this important subject, from the unhappy differences at this time subsisting between Great Britain and her colonies.

I would not, willingly, disoblige either the one or the other; indeed, I am not fearful that I shall do so, as I shall attempt only to heal those unhappy divisions, and to convince both, that it is their mutual interest to unite, and to make their commerce mutually and reciprocally useful to each other. And farther, that I may appear free from every appearance of partiality, either for the mother-country or her colonies, I shall not touch on the duties and obligations mutually arising from the relation they stand in to each other; but endeavour principally to prove, as

I said above, that it is the interest of both to extend their commerce, and make it as useful as possible to each other. In order to do this, I shall consider the state of the mother-country, before these colonies were planted, and the great advantages arising to Britain from those plantations, as also the state which the mother-country and the colonies will both be in, if the colonies obstinately persist in their late resolutions.

It is quite unnecessary to point out the vast consequence of our trade with our American colonies; therefore, I shall only say, in the words of the judicious Doctor Franklin, “ The people
“ in our American colonies increase so
“ fast, that in a little time, they will
“ take off every thing we make that
“ suits their consumption.” This I can readily suppose to be true, and I with pleasure look forward to that time,
when

when the commerce of the mother-country and her colonies will be established on such a footing, that, by a mutual dependance on each other, they will be independant of all the world besides, so far as regards importation in general: for, by this union, we may supply every part of the known world, and receive their money in return. But it appears to me, that they can never be independant of one another. They may, indeed, distress each other for a time; but both must suffer by it in the end. Thus, if the colonies will be content with the necessaries of life, and sacrifice their luxuries and all their imaginary wants, to their resolution of not complying with the demands of government; their remaining real wants, may be easily supplied among themselves, and the present inconvenience be greater to Britain than to them, as we begin already fatally to experience
in

in some of our manufactories, where a great number of hands are now unemployed, which, for many years past, have found sufficient employment for that country alone.

I do not pretend to determine as to the propriety or impropriety of the late measure of government, in regard to our American colonies: I would not, willingly, wade out of my depth in politics. I only point out the natural consequences attending those measures, provided these people recede not from their present resolution; and I earnestly wish, for the sake of both, the mother-country and her colonies, that all differences were removed, and every mutual endearment and advantage restored, as it appears to me that it would be for the interest of both.

I now come to consider the state of the mother-country before these colonies were planted; and which I may venture

venture to say, was very low, compared to what it now is.

The increase of the people of London, since these colonies were planted, is one proof of the great advantage arising from them. Before that time, the people of London were computed at one hundred thousand; at the death of Queen ELIZABETH they were increased to one hundred and fifty thousand; and they are now about six times that number. In those days our neighbours, the Germans and the Italians, furnished us with almost every thing; and Spain poured in upon us all the products of America, from whence we soon after supplied them.

Before the American colonies were planted, the legal interest of money was twelve per cent. and the common price of land twelve years purchase, as was observed in a former part of this work. Our manufactures were few, and very

ferent; the number of merchants small, and, of course, we had very few ships; probably not so many as belong now to our northern colonies. But, so soon as our plantations were tolerably settled, our shipping increased amazingly. We coined, within twenty years after Queen ELIZABETH's death, about five millions; in twenty years after that, about seven millions; and, in the next twenty years, eight millions. The interest of money fell in proportion, and lands rose to eighteen years purchase. Our manufactures increased prodigiously; principally from the demand for them in the plantations, who took off nearly one half of them; and now they take, or till very lately did take, much more than half, provided we reckon the East-India goods sent them, which we receive in return for our manufactures.

When our colonies were in their infancy, they were a burthen to this nation,

tion, which is ever the case of all infant colonies ; but, they soon made us very ample amends ; and, therefore, I would chuse to suppose the obligation mutual, and that nothing is to be expected from each other upon that account. I hope that the mother-country and her colonies will ever be bound to each other by the strongest of all ties ; viz. that of mutual interest ; which union will be more lasting than any other.

Before I speak of the present state of our colonies, I would wish to have it remembered that Great Britain is now in a situation to enforce the execution of all her laws ; and that nothing could shew her maternal regard for the colonies, in a stronger light, nor discover a greater inclination in her to comply with their requests, than the repeal of the Stamp Act ; a measure thought, by many, to derogate from the dignity of
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the legislature. But, it being done in consequence of a request made in the most proper manner, and in full expectation of a suitable return, it has been in general approved.

I am sorry to say, that this last act has been opposed with a kind of obstinate warmth, very unsuitable to the obligations the colonies are under to the legislature of this kingdom, for it's constant care and unalterable disposition, to promote their Interest: and, from this conduct of the colonies, I am led to believe, that those violent party differences, so long subsisting here, have extended themselves to America.

But after such a compliance, as the repeal of the stamp act, it certainly remained with the colonies to consider in what manner to evince their regard for the mother-country, and to make every suitable return in their power; instead of which, the colonies seem to expect
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that this government should relinquish all the power they have over them.

Surely every one must think it highly unreasonable, that the colonies should increase in riches and power, through the aid and indulgence of Great Britain; and, at the same time, that Great Britain should bear the weight of all her taxes alone; or that the rise and magnificence of the British colonies should have any tendency towards the impoverishing of Great Britain. Indeed, were this to be the case, it would be the interest of the mother-country to keep her children in a state of dependance and subjection; and that Great Britain has it still in her power to do so, is very clear.

It has been a mistaken notion, that the colonies could all readily unite, and, by that means, be independant of the mother-country. On the contrary, it appears to me extremely easy for Great Britain

Britain to prevent their uniting at all, in any such manner as to oppose the power of her fleets and armies.

The situation of our colonies which stretch along the coast of North-America, and their being divided by great rivers, make it easy to guard those passages, and prevent an union even of those upon the continent: still easier will it be to prevent an union with the island colonies, if both should be so inclined.

Again, the different colonies being under different and distinct orders of governors, makes it much more difficult for them to unite, without the timely knowledge of the mother-country. Besides, it would be mighty easy, by a squadron of light frigates, to prevent their communication with the sugar islands; which would so ruin their trade, and more especially New England, that it could not long subsist.

And

And, if all this would not do, there is still an effectual remedy left; viz. that of placing standing forces among them, and obliging them to pay those very troops which are sent to keep them in subjection; and, though this would be extremely inconsistent with the lenity of Great Britain, and what I hope will never be the case, yet, other nations have done so by way of prevention.

Some have also feared, or have endeavoured to make others fear, that our colonies, upon a thorough breach with us, might put themselves under the protection of some foreign power. Now this could be no other than France, Spain, or Holland. Of the two former their can be no fear; the religion and government of those despotic nations, and their persecuting spirit, so different from the religion of protestants, and the mild, just, and gentle government of Great Britain, is so well known, as for

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ever

ever to prevent a union with them. As to Holland, there can be but little fear; for as we lie between it and New England, we could easily prevent an attempt of this sort: besides, the colonies could get nothing by the change; and, should we ever after reduce them by force of arms, they would be treated as a conquered people. But, the greatest and most general fear, and, indeed, what they of late seem to threaten us with, is their going into manufactures, and thereby supplying themselves with what they now take from us. If this was likely to happen, the vigilance of our legislature would, doubtless, take measures to prevent it. But, I shall offer two reasons why they will not go into manufactures, to any degree, that would much injure us. First, till they are fully peopled, labour will be so dear among them, that they will not be able to manufacture nearly so cheap as they can

can buy from England; and next, it appears to me, that it will be more for their interest to turn all their thoughts, and to exert all their powers, in cultivating their different soils, and producing those things which we now take from other nations.

To support the first of those reasons, I shall appeal to an author, who cannot be supposed to want affection for the American colonies, I mean Doctor FRANKLIN; who says, in his Observations concerning the Increase of Mankind, speaking of the vast increase of people in North-America, “ But, notwithstanding this increase, so vast is
 “ the territory, that it will require
 “ Many Ages to settle it fully; and, till
 “ it is fully settled, labour will never
 “ be cheap there, where no man continues long a labourer for others,
 “ but gets a plantation of his own; no
 “ man continues long a journeyman to

“ a trade, but goes among the new
 “ settlers, and sets up for himself.”
 Many other good reasons has this judicious author given why labour cannot be cheap enough in North-America to establish manufactures there.

This agrees with the spirit of the foregoing part of this work; in which, I hope, it has been clearly proved, that no state ever carried manufactures to any considerable extent, where great quantities of land lay uncultivated, to be purchased very cheap; and where, of course, the necessaries of life were to be obtained by little labour. This is certainly the case with our colonies in North-America now, and may continue so for many ages to come, if not always: and, therefore, those ideas of manufacturing in opposition to Great Britain, talked of, I believe, more in England than in America, have no foundation; and, I think, I may venture to say, that

that those who would widen the difference between Great Britain and her colonies, by encouraging such ideas, can have no very sincere regard for either.

I shall now proceed to shew that it will be more for the interest of our North-American colonies to clear and cultivate the land, in all their different soils and climes, in order to produce those things which we now buy from other nations, than it would be to go into manufactures. The reason is obvious; for in the one they will be assisted, to the utmost, by the mother-country; in the other, as strenuously opposed. Nothing, certainly, would create greater heart-burnings and discontent in Great Britain, than her colonies going into manufactures. On the other hand, nothing can be so agreeable, or so much for the interest of both, as the colonies turning their whole thoughts and powers to the cultivation

of their lands. Now, in order to encourage every new attempt of this sort, and to induce the colonies to lay aside all thoughts of manufacturing, I hope Great Britain will give certain annual premiums and bounties, on the raising commodities, most useful and advantageous to both: and these would principally be raw silk, hemp, flax, iron, and all kinds of naval stores; for which we pay large annual ballances in money, when we might procure them from our plantations, in exchange for our manufactures, to mutual advantage.

We have already experienced the good effects of such encouragements, in the importation of pitch and tar; which Sweden had once monopolized, and rendered extremely dear to us; nay, when a war broke out with France, it was found that we had not pitch and tar enough for the use of the Royal Navy, nor could we procure it from
Sweden,

Sweden, but upon their own, very disadvantageous, terms. The people of England took the alarm at this, and the merchants made application to Parliament, that the making these commodities in our own plantations might be encouraged; and the encouragement given by Parliament soon produced great quantities from thence. Indeed, they so much increased in the making of pitch and tar, that we were soon enabled to export great quantities, which fully reimbursed us for the bounty. This would be the case with all our imports from Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, as likewise for Raw Silk; an article of infinite consequence to this kingdom, and very capable of being cultivated in many parts of America *.

It

* The ingenious Doctor PULLEYN, in his Treatise on the Culture of Silk, observes, in p. 2, that " silk worms might be reared, to perfection,

It seems to be the present disposition of the legislature, to adopt every measure that will promote the true interest of the colonies, by giving them all due encouragement to produce those commodities which we, at present, import from the East countries; and, likewise, every other species of materials for manufactures, imported from any other country.

It remains then to be considered in what manner the colonies shall effectually evince their sincere regard for the prosperity of Great Britain; and, as this disposition in our colonies cannot appear too early, it seems to be incumbent on them immediately to lay aside all appearance of manufactures of every kind, which may have been attempted by

“ in all our colonies on the continent of America,
 “ from New England to Georgia, inclusive, as
 “ the mulberry-tree will grow in most of them
 “ without any culture.”

them;

them; and, as an earnest of this, that they give their orders, as usual, without restrictions; and that they publicly resolve, in their assemblies, to make such laws as shall, in future, tend most to encourage the importation of British manufactures, and to abolish all manufactures which interfere with the mother-country. Their doing this would be dutifully giving the legislature of this kingdom a reason for behaving with a reciprocal return of parental affection, by repealing any other acts which may be found to distress them. And, I cannot help thinking, that if the people, in all the different climes and different soils, through the vast extent of North America, were employed in cultivating silk, wine, flax, hemp, masts, yards, and other ship-timber, and in building large ships for the exportation of those bulky commodities, as is done in the East countries, and that

that England would encourage such productions by premiums and bounties, the Americans would think it their interest to be thus employed, and lay aside all thoughts of manufacturing; which they cannot carry on to any advantage, or nearly so cheap and perfect, as they can import them from Britain, nor will they for several centuries to come, if ever at all; for the reason before assigned; namely, “that manufactures
 “ seldom flourish in a fertile country,
 “ thinly peopled, because land being
 “ there of small value, from the scarcity
 “ of inhabitants, provisions are cheap
 “ and labour dear.”

These things being finally settled upon a permanent foundation, I have only to add, that Britain should not take advantage of the monopoly which she has against the colonies, by the act of navigation; but should sell every article as cheap to them as to any other country:

try : for they already labour under great disadvantages, from the not being able to make their remittances in any tolerable time ; for this they must pay for in the price of the goods. But this evil was remedied in part, whilst the government did not interfere with the trade carried on by the colonies to the Spanish settlements ; which procured them remittances in dollars to a large amount, by almost every ship. Many sensible persons think, that it would be still for the interest of Great Britain, to leave the Spaniards to take care of that trade themselves. To expect that we should do it, would be like our expecting France to send ships upon our coasts to prevent their people from selling us their wines, brandy, teas, linens, &c. and carrying back with them our gold, or, what to them is better, our wool. But some may say, we should sell these goods to the Spaniards ourselves. This,
if

if true, would be no reason for preventing it; because we had better sell them to the colonies than to Spain. But the fact is otherwise; for since the treaty of Utrecht, which left Spain in the house of Bourbon, the Spaniards deal with France to a very great amount, and with England, but just sufficient to encourage us, as I said above, to take off their luxuries, which France does not want, and Holland will not encourage; and in this view, both Spain and Portugal are gainers, though they pay dearer for English goods, than they could buy from France or Holland.

To conclude my observations on this important subject---If it can be brought about, that, by proper encouragement from England, our colonies should raise and cultivate these commodities, which we now purchase, with our money, from Russia, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, besides wines, silks, olives,
cotton,

cotton, wax, and a thousand other things, and export the naval commodities to England in large ships, such as are now used in the Norway trade; and, besides the benefit of building such ships, it would be a new nursery of seamen. By doing these things our colonies would amazingly increase in people; the consumption of provisions, the grand fund of their prosperity, would be increased; and the consumption of our manufactures would augment in the same proportion. These trades would effectually furnish the colonies with returns for England, which they now so much want, and labour under so many difficulties to procure; and they would soon have a circulation of current money. Now let us add these new branches of trade, to those which they have already with the islands, and tell me if this is not their plain road to riches and prosperity, a road infinitely easier

easier than through the mazes of manufactures, entirely new to them ; and through the obstacles which Great-Britain would ever be throwing in their way, before they brought them to any degree of perfection. In a word, their interest should tye them to England, if their duty did not. To separate from the mother-country, would be to be undone ; and it would be no satisfaction to them, that they had involved Great-Britain in their difficulties, even supposing that might be the case. Thus, I think, it must appear as clear to every one, as it does to me, that an immediate total reconciliation between Great-Britain and her American colonies would be the interest of both ; and if any there are, who, out of party prejudice, are base enough to endeavour to prevent it, they must be enemies to both, in whatever shape they may appear.

MAXIM

M A X I M IX.

That the strength, riches, and prosperity of this kingdom depend on our being able to sell our native produce and manufactures, as cheap in foreign markets, as any other commercial state.

It is strange, indeed, that the French should be able to undersell us in the staple manufacture of this kingdom; more especially as they are obliged to buy our wool, at a very great price, to mix with their own.

The reason given for this, by Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE, and many other writers upon the subject, has been, principally, the weight of our taxes; which falling on the necessaries of the poor, raise the price of labour in our manufacturies.

That the different price of labour, between England and France, is the principal reason for their being able to

underfell us, I readily allow; but hope I have proved, that it does not proceed from our taxes, because both France and Holland are higher taxed than we are; particularly the last; perhaps five times as high; and yet, labour is considerably cheaper in Holland than it is in England. It is likewise cheaper in France by one third, some say two thirds; which will clearly account for the loss of our trade, especially if we add, that, in the woollen manufactures, in general, more than two thirds of the cost arises from the labour.

In the course of this work, a variety of arguments, drawn from experience, have been produced to prove, that when provisions are cheap, labour is, relatively, dear. It has been shewn, in one particular instance, that when wheat was in general at two shillings a quarter, here in England, labour was so dear,

dear, that a bushel of wheat was earned by the labour of two days, which was almost twice as high as it is now ; for though wheat is now at a moderate price, a man cannot earn a bushel by less than about four days labour.

The different price of labour then, between England and France, and England and Holland, must have some other source; and this appears to me to be the sobriety, frugality, habitual industry, and constant labour of the Dutch and French, and the disposition for idleness and debauchery of the English manufacturing populace; and till, through the wisdom of the legislature, some laws shall be framed and duly executed, which shall extirpate idleness, restrain debauchery, prevent vagrancy, enforce industry, and keep the poor constantly employed, we shall continue to be undersold, to the total loss of our trade.

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The French, indeed, besides the advantage of the low price of labour, have spared no pains, stopped at no measures, fair or unfair, to get our trade from us. The highest encouragements have been given to foreigners to reside among them, and to teach them their arts; as hath been already shewn; no expence has been spared to get at ours and the Irish wool; and, they have followed the example of the Dutch, by taking off almost all their port-duties, that their exports and imports might have free vent; a measure which will never fail of increasing the trade of a nation. It has been observed, that the difficulties which the French laboured under, would have prevented almost every other nation from attempting woollen manufacturies, having neither materials nor workmen. But steadiness, resolution, and sound policy, with great expence, carried them through it all; besides,

besides, the hopes of these volatile, high-spirited people generally overbalance their fears; and from hence they are led to attempt great and difficult things. But, their sparing no expence to carry a point, is the best reason why they succeed; for money surmounts all difficulties.

Another advantage which the French are supposed to have over us in trade, and which has not yet been mentioned in this work, is, the high value of their money compared with ours. I shall, therefore, take notice of it now.

Since the year 1613, the French have, by frequent enhancements of their money, varied the relation between silver and commodities; that is, they have altered the measure of value; by which means they do not give half so much silver for a day's labour as they did one hundred and fifty years ago.

At that time, they coined about

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eighteen

eighteen livres out of eight ounces troy-weight of fine silver: at present, they coin near fifty-four livres out of the same quantity; and yet, they now give no more sous for a day's labour, than they did before such enhancement. Hence it is manifest, that, from this circumstance only, the price of their labour is considerably fallen, whilst our silver money has remained the same, and our labour has received no diminution that way. This, added to their labouring people living in a much cheaper way than ours, will help to account for the loss of our trade to Italy, Turkey, and Spain; but the loss of the Spanish trade is partly owing, as I said before, to the treaty of Utrecht, which left that kingdom in the hands of a prince of the house of Bourbon.

But, to place this important consideration in a stronger point of view, let it be considered, that silver is the
standard

standard measure of the value of commodities, in almost every part of the known world; and hence it will clearly appear, that if one state can purchase any given quantity of labour, with a less quantity of silver, than is given for the same quantity of labour by another state, labour may be said to be cheaper in the former. France purchases an equal quantity of labour with less silver than we do; consequently labour is cheaper in France than in England. But it is generally thought to be very dangerous to alter the value of money in a state, and that it suits better with the arbitrary, despotic government of France, than it would do with our milder and more equitable constitution. Yet, it appears that something Might, nay, that something Should be done relative to our silver coin. That something Might be done, without creating any discontent among the people, appears

pears from the present circulation of shillings not really worth ten-pence a piece. These shillings are said to be coined at Birmingham; but I have not heard of any one's having been detected in it, nor of any attempts made of that sort. This is, in effect, an enhancement of our silver coin, and is thus far of use towards lowering the price of labour, as these shillings purchase an equal quantity of every thing, that a new shilling, from the mint, would do. That something should be done to relieve the distresses which trades-people labour under, from the great scarcity of silver, I think no one will dispute, the complaint being universal; and, it is become a matter of wonder, why there is not either a coinage of silver of a proportionate value to the shillings now circulating, which would give the government the profit which these coiners have now, or, that
more

more of those shillings are not coined by the same people, when the demand is so great and pressing. This is a matter which I just hint at, and humbly submit the consideration of it to the wisdom of the legislature.

After all, Great-Britain hath many natural advantages over France, and we should most certainly be able to sell our native produce and manufactures as cheap in foreign markets, as either the French or the Dutch, provided we could lower the price of labour, by rendering our poor industrious.

To make constant moderate labour habitual and entertaining to the poor, is a matter well worthy the attention of a British Parliament; and, I hope, that the difficulties attending this great work will serve only to animate the legislature in the attempt, and not induce them to leave it in the state they found it, as many former parliaments have done.

As I would willingly contribute my mite towards a measure of such infinite consequence to my country, I shall conclude this work, by offering my thoughts on this important subject, with great humility and defference, to the legislature of this kingdom ; not as a digested plan, but as the outlines or sketch of one ; hoping that some or other of the hints here thrown out, may be so improved, that something may, at length, be done to enforce industry, and to make moderate labour habitual and entertaining to the poor, as it appears to be in Holland and France ; more especially in the former, where I am well informed, that those who have been accustomed to labour, would rather work than sit still.

To be as clear and explicit as I can on this important subject, I shall divide it into two parts. In the first, I shall consider what methods are most likely
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to promote general industry among those who do labour, but labour only a part of their time; and, in the second, I shall consider the methods most likely to prevent vagrancy and common begging, and to lower the poor's rates.

First then I am to consider the most probable methods to promote general industry among those who do labour, but who labour only a part of their time.

In the course of the preceding pages I have repeatedly shewn the advantages arising to the poor themselves, from constant, moderate labour; such as may make men good husbands, good fathers, good members of society; and such as is attended with health, peace and happiness. I have also shewn that the very reverse of this awaits those who spend their money, and their more precious time, in idleness and debauchery; paying high taxes, which they otherwise need not pay,

pay, neglecting their families and destroying their constitutions.

But as none of these doctrines are new, and as these consequences have been found, by experience, ever to attend right and wrong actions, and yet people go on in the same road of folly and wickedness; I despair of seeing any great good arise from precept and example. Necessity alone can operate powerfully enough to produce these wished for changes in the conduct of the manufacturing populace of this kingdom.

The Dutch labouring people, being the soberest and most industrious in Europe, one is naturally inclined to think that their police must be excellent, and their poor's laws well framed and duly executed: therefore, as it may not be disagreeable, nor perhaps uninteresting, to the reader to see a part of them, I shall copy here, an extract of a letter, written

by an English gentleman, in Holland,
to Doctor DAVENANT.

SIR,

It is easy to answer your question ; How are the poor maintained in Holland ? But to do it so as to please you, who look farther than the outside of things, would require more than one day or one letter. However, I will be as particular as I am able to be on this subject, on so short a warning, sensible that it is of the greatest consequence to us, and that those who never considered it, will hardly imagine what an immense profit England might make, by setting her poor to work, besides all the advantages of getting rid of all your pick-pockets, &c. &c. &c. I will first give you some extracts of the laws of this country, about the poor, and then an account of their practice.

The earliest law that I find in their
statute

statute books, relating to the poor, is a long one, of the emperor CHARLES the Vth. October 7, 1531.

It enacts,

A R T I C L E IX.

That whereas the poor of our provinces are now much more in number than they formerly used to be, and whereas it is found by experience, that many abuses have arisen from suffering them to beg and ask alms*, particularly that it fixes them in idleness, which is the beginning of all evil, and that neither they nor their children follow any trade or method of getting their living, but are thus brought into base actions, and a bad manner of life; so that, when young, strong and healthy, they nevertheless extort, by great im-

* This seems to imply that there was not then any law against beggary.

portunities

portunities, what ought to go to the impotent poor.

A R T I C L E X.

That no one, be it man or woman, from this time forward, shall beg or ask alms, by day or by night, secretly or openly, in the streets, in the churches, nor in nor at the houses of our good people, in any manner whatever, upon the penalty that whoever acts contrary to this law, shall be put, for the first offence, in prison, and fed with bread and water*; and, for the second, be whipped.

A R T I C L E XIII.

Whoever shall permit their children, whether great or small, to commit any rascallity, or to beg and ask alms, shall undergo the aforefaid penalties; and

* This is probably the greatest punishment that could be inflicted on our poor.

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the children shall be corrected, according to the direction of our officers.

A R T I C L E X V.

We forbid all persons, who by themselves or their children enjoy any share of the distribution of the alms purse, from henceforth to go into and converse in taverns, cabarets, or such like places : We, likewise, forbid them playing at nine-pins, bowls, dice, or other such forbidden games, upon pains of arbitrary punishment; consenting, nevertheless, that they may sometimes drink a pot of beer for recreation, with their wives, but not to be drunk.

The above laws were all made before the reformation. The first edict of the states and cities of Holland was on the nineteenth of March, 1614.

A R T I C L E I.

That all men and women who, being in health, go a begging, or are

vagabonds, either in the towns or open countries, shall be obliged, within four days from the publication of this edict, to quit the province of Holland, or to acquaint the magistrate, where they design to get their livelihood, by work or by trade, and to give him a declaration who they are, whence they came, what is their business, and, likewise, where they lodge, and pray permission to stay in that place one, two, or three days, engaging themselves not to beg in the mean time.

A R T I C L E IV.

The beggars and vagabonds who are not able or fit to work, shall, within two days after the publication of this edict, be sent to the place of their abode, and from thence they are forbid to wander, or beg, under the penalty of being, for the first offence, put to diet of bread and water; and, for the second

second offence, to be whipped and banished ; and, for the third offence, publicly whipped, marked with the burning iron, and banished again.

ARTICLE IX.

The parents and lodgers of children, as well above, as under eight years old, are required to take good care that their children do not go a begging, under the penalty of being punished as beggars themselves.

ARTICLE XII.

Officers are required to search inns, and all suspected places, to find out beggars, and apprehend them.

Thus far, the states and cities of Holland: The next law is a placart of the United Provinces, June 25, 1649.

ARTICLE IV.

It is likewise enacted that every town, village or parish, shall maintain

its poor out of the income of its charitable foundations and collections, as far as it will go; and in case these means shall fall short, then the magistrates shall maintain them at the general expence of the inhabitants, as can most conveniently be done; provided always that the poor be obliged to work and labour, either for merchants, farmers, &c. &c. according to their strength and abilities, for reasonable wages, in order that they may, as far as possible, be supported that way; provided also, that they are to be indulged in no idleness or idleness.

A R T I C L E IX.

To the end that the officers of the towns and open countries may be better informed and advertized where vagabonds and offenders are, we command and require them, and their under officers, to go about all ordinary mar-

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kets,

226 T H O U G H T S O N

kets, churches, hospitals, and poor houses, upon fair-days, marriages, and such like assemblies of feasts, where these offenders are generally found, to take them up, and proceed against them according to this edict.

A R T I C L E X.

And to provide against the cheats, which some beggars practice, of appearing to be afflicted with sickness, or otherwise infirm or lame; it is ordered that beggars suspected of such deceit, shall, by order of the magistrate, and at the expence of the place where taken, be visited and examined by sworn physicians and surgeons, that the truth being known, those who have been guilty of such cheats, may be punished according to the nature of their offence.

A R T I C L E XIII.

Charging and commanding all officers of justice, in their respective districts, to

do their duty, by apprehending all such idlers, wanderers and vagabonds, on pain of being, not only arbitrarily punished, but of being obliged to pay all the damages which may happen to any person, through their having neglected to apprehend such offenders.

A R T I C L E XV.

And that no difficulties may be made by justices, or officers of particular places, before whom the said offenders shall be brought, about the judging these offenders, we strictly and expressly command, that whoever such offenders are brought before, he shall be obliged to examine and sentence them, upon pain of being not only deprived of his office, but otherwise arbitrarily punished.

These are some of the heads of the laws of the Dutch, relative to their poor. They are certainly wise and

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good:

good: but I most admire those which are made to enforce the execution of the rest, such as the two last articles.

We have many very good laws relative to vagrants and common beggars; but their execution is shamefully neglected; and even in the cities of London and Westminster, where every parish has an officer, whose particular business it is to prevent common begging, you cannot stand a minute at your door, but some object, either of real or feigned distress, solicits your charity with the most disagreeable importunity. This is hardly ever known in Holland; for the laws are good, and they are duly executed. But, whether the goodness of their poor's laws, and the due execution of them, are the sole causes of that habitual industry which reigns among them, I will not determine. It is probable that necessity first prompted it, and habit made it agreeable.

able. This brings me back to my first proposition; namely,

To consider the most probable methods to promote general industry, among those who do labour, but who labour only a part of their time.

This is universally allowed to be the most readily effected by increasing the number of labouring hands. The most expeditious way of increasing the number of labouring hands, is, most certainly, a general naturalization; which would be giving a public invitation to a number of industrious people to come and enjoy the privileges of Englishmen. These privileges are so well known, and are held in such estimation, by foreigners, that, I doubt not but we should have many come among us, who would be contented and happy to work six days for the same wages that our people now earn in four. The consequence would be, that our labouring

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people

people would be under a necessity of doing the same, provided the laws against idleness were duly executed.

But, if a scheme of general naturalization should not be agreeable, some other way should be found out to increase the number of working hands; at least, of hands able to work, whose labour might be enforced by the laws. Now, in order to do this, I humbly propose,

1, That a tax be laid on men and boys, not employed in trade or agriculture, but as footmen, &c. in a proportion, something of this sort; every master or mistress to pay for one footman, two pounds per annum; for two, six pounds; for three, twelve pounds; for four, twenty pounds, and so on. However, the wisdom of parliament will much better determine the proportion than I can do.

Such a tax would bring in a very considerable sum from those who could

afford to pay it, and might be applied to the relief of trade, by easing it of some tax or other, or else to relieve the land-tax; besides which, if the folly and extravagance of the people of this kingdom rise not beyond all measure, a great number of able hands would want employment; and, though some of them, from living luxurious idle lives, might, at first, take to very bad courses rather than labour; yet, by a due execution of the laws, particularly those hereafter mentioned, they would, by degrees, fall into manufactures and agriculture, and add to the riches of the state, by increasing the number of useful hands.

2, Next, that every obstacle which lies in the road to matrimony may be removed, I humbly propose a repeal of the marriage act.

3, That every encouragement may be given to matrimony, I humbly propose,

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That

That the waste crown lands *, which are supposed to be about 3,000,000 of acres, should be given as marriage portions to the eldest daughters of labouring people living nearest to such lands; say twenty acres to each; which would portion out 150,000; with a certain condition; viz. that unless these lands are cultivated within a certain time after the marriage, they should be forfeited. The children of these marriages to be all employed in agriculture.

And, as a farther encouragement to matrimony, and to remove the fears which many have of not being able to maintain large families, and who are thereby deterred from marrying, I humbly propose,

4, That no labouring person shall have above two children to maintain,

* This has been proposed by a judicious author, in a tract, entitled, Observations on the Number and Misery of the Poor.

unless

unless they chuse it: all above that number to be deemed the children of the state, and to be brought up at the expence of the state, in a way which will be hereafter mentioned; or any other more approved by the legislature.

And, still farther to increase the number of useful hands, and thereby to encourage industry, and lower the price of labour, I humbly propose,

5, That all debtors be, once in a year, released from prison, on their effects being properly secured to their creditors; in doing which, if any wilful deception, or cheat should appear, the debtor then to be treated as a felon. Many now live idle in jails, who could, by their labour, contribute to the common welfare, and increase the stock of the kingdom.

But, to carry this scheme, of increasing the number of useful hands, to its utmost extent, I humbly propose,

6, That

6, That all crimes, which the laws have not deemed capital (many will add, and those also) may be punished by labour, and by living on bread and water. This kind of punishment is found to be very effectual in Holland; and, probably, it would have a still greater effect in England, where people risk even their lives, to purchase idleness and luxurious living.

7, I humbly propose, that the number of tippling-houses be greatly reduced, and that no sort of gaming be allowed in them, under a very severe penalty, much greater than what is fixed by our present laws.

All the foregoing articles relate to my first consideration; viz. the most probable methods to promote general industry among those who do labour, but who labour only a part of their time.

I now come to my second head; viz.
to

to consider the methods which are most likely to prevent vagrancy and common begging, and to lower the poor's-rates.

Various have been the schemes hitherto proposed, to extirpate idleness, restrain excess and debauchery, prevent vagrancy, assist industry, employ the poor, and ease the lands of the heavy burthen of poor's-rates; but, as yet, they have all proved ineffectual and abortive: for, since the days of Doctor DAVENANT, a great projector in these matters, the poor's-rates have been said to be increased, from about 700,000 pounds per annum to 3,000,000.

This manifestly evinces, that the schemes already formed and executed, have not answered the ends proposed. However, I must own that the calculation which makes the amount of our poor's-rates to be 3,000,000, appears, to me, to be erroneous; and, therefore, I shall produce my authorities.

Some few years ago, very great clamours were raised in regard to the poor's-rates being extremely high.

The parliament then procured some account of what was paid to the poor in sundry places; whereupon it was said, in the public prints, and by the Dean of GLOUCESTER, that the calculation for the whole kingdom was at least 3,000,000 per annum. It has also been said since, by Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE, in the last edition of his Dictionary of Trade and Commerce, that the poor's-rates amount to three millions and an half; but, from the best calculations which I can obtain from several judicious friends, who have made these matters their study, and who have been assisted by both clergy and laity, in examining into the number of inhabitants, lands, and their value, payments to the poor of various parishes, &c. it has been found, upon
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computation, that the total of the poor's-rates throughout the kingdom cannot, at this time, amount to more than two millions and an half; so that the above calculation of the Dean, and likewise that of Mr. POSTLETHWAYTE, appear to be founded in conjecture, rather than formed from an estimate of parish returns.

Dr. DAVENANT estimated that, in his time, three-fourths of the labouring people in this kingdom were employed in husbandry. I suppose there are not, at present, so great a proportion of our labouring poor employed that way. However, in the villages where the poor subsist by agriculture, the poor's-rates are but a trifle; principally owing to the frugality, industry, and sobriety of these people. It is on the cities and manufacturing towns that the load of of poor lies: and yet, it is thought that even these do not pay two shillings

in the pound, and the villages not above fourpence or sixpence.

Some manufacturing towns, indeed, pay three shillings in the pound; and some villages lying near manufacturing towns, pay from sixpence to a shilling in the pound; but, I have, as near as I can, taken the averaged proportion, and I cannot find that the total of the poor's-rates in this kingdom amounts to more than two millions and an half per annum, as before said. This, indeed, is a very large sum, and surely might, and ought to be lessened: tho' the great evil does not lie so much on the sum paid to the poor's-rates, as in the great number of beggars and vagrants, who might be employed to advantage in our manufacturies.

To do this then, would be removing a very great nuisance; would tend to promote a general spirit of industry; and, by increasing the number of working
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ing hands, lessen the price of labour in our manufactures, and consequently increase our foreign trade.

Towards remedying these evils, and producing these salutary effects, I wish to contribute to the utmost of my power.

There are certain kinds of poor, who must always be a burthen to the state; whom no scheme, howsoever well framed and executed, can relieve it from. These will be mentioned in their due order.

It is for those who are able to work, that we are to find employment; it is the labour and industry of those, which we are to enforce; for this will prove extremely useful in a variety of ways.

With this view I shall offer my sentiments to the public; hoping they will be enlarged and improved upon by others.

Amongst a variety of schemes now
before

before me, I pay great attention to one, which, about five years since, was formed into an act, and passed the House of Commons. The intention of this act may be seen by the preamble, which was as follows. “ And whereas, by
“ means of the provisions aforesaid,
“ the rates collected for the use of the
“ poor, may, in a short time, be greatly reduced, and the poor, instead of
“ being dangerous and grievous to the
“ community, be rendered highly useful and beneficial; as by their industry they may be made, not only
“ to contribute to the mutual aid and
“ relief of each other, but likewise to
“ the promoting of agriculture, and to
“ the manufacturing of great quantities
“ of commodities, for which vast sums
“ are now paid to foreign countries;
“ be it therefore enacted, &c.” But this bill, for very good reasons no doubt, was thrown out in the House of
Lords.

Lords. However, I have adopted many things in that scheme, and have referred to it for many particulars, omitted in mine : I am pleased whenever I agree with the author of that scheme, yet I am not ashamed to differ from him in some material instances.

I have asserted in the foregoing tract, that nothing but necessity will produce labour and industry ; and as this opinion hath been approved by many, and contradicted by none, I see no reason for altering it, and therefore shall also make necessity the *primum mobile*, in this my present system.

It has been found, by experience, to be very difficult to keep paupers closely at work, and to make them of any real service, under the rules of a common workhouse, where they are fed at one common table, provided by the guardians of the poor.

Their work, in such houses, we have

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found

found to be of very little value, and the expence as great, or greater, within, than out of the house.

This shews that they must be laid under an absolute necessity to labour, by a dread of stripes, or a fear of the want of necessaries, and of living on bread and water, which, when judiciously blended, will, probably, produce industry; the want of proper means to enforce which, hath been one of the causes why the schemes already formed have proved abortive.

If a workhouse scheme is to answer any good purpose, in regard to clearing our streets and highways of vagrants and common beggars, in regard to extirpating idleness, debauchery and excess, promoting a spirit of industry, lowering the price of labour in our manufacturies, and easing the lands of the heavy burthen of poor's rates; such house must be made an house of terror, and not an

asylum for the poor, where they are to be plentifully fed, warmly and decently clothed, and where they do but little work: the having of such houses, and the lessening of the poor's rates, are absolutely incompatible.

The experience of all ages proves, that neither pride, nor a distant prospect of distress, are sufficient to suppress sloth and debauchery, and introduce œconomy: if they were, there would be very few poor. A poor-house, as I have said above, must then be an house of terror and punishment; not an house of plenty and affluence, without labouring to obtain it; and, therefore, the proposing to maintain the poor better in a workhouse, and at the same time to ease the poor's rates, must not only be incompatible, but also subversive of industry out of it. If the poor can find a maintainance without labour, they will not labour.

Labour must, therefore, be made the means of the poor's obtaining support ; otherwise they will be for ever idle. This, I hope, has been clearly shewn.

Idleness and debauchery can never be banished but by severity. These evil customs and habits being a consequence of one set of passions, another set must be applied to, in order to conquer them.

Love of liberty, fear of punishment, hunger, thirst, &c. must be opposed to idleness, love of intoxicating liquors, gaming, lust, &c. &c.

The great art seems to lie in properly combating the habitual errors of the poor ; for these must be first rooted out of their minds, before habits of sobriety and industry can take place in them ; and one way to do this seems to be, the placing of the poor in such a situation, that loss of liberty, hunger, thirst, &c. should be the immediate consequences
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of idleness and debauchery; and, on the other hand, that liberty, plenty, decency and respect, should be the consequences of sobriety and industry.

Any considerable degree of prudence and œconomy among the poor, would be unnecessary. Their expence should be constant; they should spend all they earn; but then they should spend it in necessaries for themselves and families, and not to purchase superfluities, or the means of a debauch.

By being sober, honest and industrious, they could always procure credit in times of sickness or other distress; and so not prove an immediate burthen to the parishes, as they do at present.

But, as a prudent populace is never to be expected, the task we have on our hands is to manage an imprudent one in such manner, that their vices may be rendered as little hurtful to themselves and to society as possible.

It is the province of the politician, by counteracting the passions of the populace, to convert their errors into advantages, and thereby to oblige vagrants and other idle poor to labour, and by their labour to maintain themselves, as well as to assist those who are unable to work.

This is the principal object of my present consideration.

Now, in order to judge more accurately of these affairs, it will be proper to consider, First, what sorts of poor we have: Secondly, the most obvious causes of their poverty; and, Thirdly, how to remedy the evil consequences attending it.

First then, our poor consist of orphans, aged, impotent, sick, lame, idiots, lunatics, and vagrants, or other idle persons who can labour and will not.

Secondly, we are to trace the causes
of

of their poverty; and we immediately find that the poverty of all these, vagrants and idle persons only excepted, arises from natural causes, and that their ill effects are not to be prevented by human prudence. These, therefore, are proper objects of charity, and must be provided for.

No scheme, as I said above, can prevent these from being a burthen to the lands; any farther than as such scheme may operate towards the obliging vagrants and other idle poor to labour, in order not only to maintain themselves, but to contribute also to the maintenance of the impotent poor.

As for vagrants and common beggars, the final causes of their poverty are idleness and debauchery; but the causes of their idleness and debauchery may be various: I will enumerate some of them.

I. The great number of tippling-houses, in which the idle poor play

at cards, nine-pins, shuffle-board, and other low games. It is not merely the love of ease, it is not mere laziness, that makes our poor quit their work; but the love of gaming and intoxicating liquors, which operate like powerful opiates, lulling their reason and their consciences into a dangerous calm. Such places are not only the causes of idleness and debauchery in Vagrants, but also of those who work a part of their time, for which they will be paid high wages. There are but few alehouses in Holland, and in those few, gaming is cautiously prevented.

II. Another cause of their idleness and debauchery, is indiscreet charity. To be humane, generous and compassionate to proper objects, is noble and praise-worthy; but it should be considered, that very few who beg in the streets, without a pass, can be proper objects of charity; to relieve them then

is

is to oppose the laws of the community, and to encourage idleness.

III. Another cause of the idleness and debauchery of our poor is, contested elections. These, indeed, do not come often ; perhaps if they did, the contest would not be so violent, nor attended with such bad consequences. The poor, for several months, both before and after an election, live in one continued scene of riot and debauchery; and they do not return regularly to their labour in a long time : many contract habits of idleness, and turn vagrants or robbers, and many die of excess and sitting up late.

IV. Another encouragement, if it may not be stiled a cause of the vices above-mentioned, is a set of poor's-laws ill calculated, and ill enforced.

These laws then, it is most certainly consistent with the wisdom of the legislature to repeal or alter ; and it ap-

pears to me particularly necessary, totally to abolish the power of the justices of the peace, with regard to the relief of the poor.

Our poor's-laws are, at present, a snare to the poor, and leave them loose to idleness, debauchery, and insolence; because they depend on these laws for support in necessity; and, knowing that a justice of peace will relieve them, they despise parish officers, insult the inhabitants, and do not think themselves obliged to their benefactors for what they receive.

It is upon the poor's laws that the poor rely, and not upon their own behaviour and conduct; and this tends to destroy all subordination, as well as gratitude and mutual esteem. If the poor considered their relief as a benefaction, it would produce in them reverence and gratitude towards their benefactors; and, this would likewise beget

beget esteem and compassion in their superiors : but, as the law now stands, all those mutual endearments are lost ; the poor insult the rich, and the rich despise and hate the poor.

Thirdly, we are to consider the most likely way to remedy those evils. And,

First, I humbly conceive this may, in a great measure, be done, by lodging the power of ordering relief to paupers, in the breast of a vestry, formed of those who pay twenty shillings and upwards, per annum, to the poor's rate; and the majority of such vestry to order what they deem prudent ; by which means the relief of the poor, will depend upon their sobriety, regular conduct, industry, real necessity, and the like, and appear as proceeding from the generosity of the pay-masters.

Poverty, thus relieved, would consider itself as under obligations to the humanity which succoured it, and not
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look upon the help which it received, as an aid due to it by law.

Should it be objected, that, if this was the case, the poor would be starved; I reply, that, if I am rightly informed, there is hardly any community in the world that is obliged, by law, to maintain its own poor, excepting England; and yet, that the poor are as plentifully and generously relieved in other countries as in this. Bishop BURNET says, "Scotland is the poorest part
" of this island; there are no laws there
" for maintaining the poor; and yet,
" they are always plentifully relieved." This is also the case with the Dutch, and the Hans-Towns in general. In Hamburgh, one of the greatest trading cities in the world, they have no laws for maintaining their poor; and yet, they have scarce any beggars, and very few criminals.

But, in order to make this last proposition of the use which I intended it

should be, I earnestly recommend it to the better sort of people in every parish, that they make a point of attending these vestries, and not to leave this important concern to a few of the inferior inhabitants; inferior, I mean, as to understanding as well as fortune, who are fond of power, and of talking themselves into consequence; as, I fear, is the case, at present, with nine out of ten of the parishes throughout the kingdom. Indeed, if the poor were to be relieved this way and no other, it is reasonable to suppose that gentlemen of understanding and property, would so far consider their own interest and the welfare of the state, as to take care that such poor only are relieved, as are proper objects of charity; and that no encouragement be given to idleness, through prejudice or partiality; which, I fear, is sometimes the case at present.

But though this attention of the heads
of

parishes would put the maintenance of the poor upon a much better footing than it is at present; yet, it would fall far short of the plan of which this is intended to be a sketch; namely, the obliging all those to labour who are able to do so, and by their labour to maintain themselves, and contribute towards the maintenance of the impotent poor. Therefore,

Secondly, as a remedy for the evils before-mentioned, I humbly propose the erecting of county workhouses, and putting them under proper government and restriction; which would, probably, be the most effectual means of preventing idleness and vagrancy.

These spacious fabrics * should be erected

* It may be observed that this seems to contradict the spirit of the foregoing treatise, where dearth of necessaries is supposed to be the grand incitement to industry: but, in a house of this sort,
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erected at places most convenient for the business intended to be carried on in them, near navigable rivers, where water-carriage, fuel, food, and dwelling, may be had on reasonable terms.

In these places, most proper for each manufactory, the poor shall be employed in the manufactures of cordage, sack-cloth, tent-cloth, hair-cloth, pack-thread, nets for the fishery, canvas for spatterdashes, shirts, and trowsers, woollen for soldiers cloaths, seamen's jackets and watch-coats, blankets, tilts for waggons, mop-yarn, hats, stockings, and every other thing that can be carried on for the use of the navy and army; which may be easily learnt,

the labourers will have no surplus money or time; but whatever they earn over and above their necessary expences, will be converted to the uses hereafter mentioned; and, as they will be obliged to constant labour, the less their necessary expences are, the better for the house.

which

which require no elegance, and of which the materials are not very valuable.

In these workhouses I humbly propose that all the soldiers cloaths and shoes should be made, and that from these manufacturies the government should be furnished with whatever is wanted, at a market price; giving these houses the preference of manufacturing all kinds of commodities wanted for the use of the army and navy. But, be it remembered, I do not propose that all the houses of this sort shall be employed in manufactures for the uses of the government only; many of them, from their situation, and various other causes, may be better employed in manufactures of other kinds; where, as well as in those before-mentioned, merchants, in general, may furnish themselves with such commodities as it best suits such houses to manufacture to advantage; and these, for many reasons,
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will be of the coarser kinds. I only recommend the manufactures for the use of the navy and army, wherever it is convenient, that the government may have immediately, and at all times, the power of countenancing and encouraging this scheme.

In places of this sort, where numbers of persons are always learning, the work should require but little art, and the materials should be coarse, as there will frequently be a waste of them. This is one reason for recommending manufactures of hemp, flax, and coarse wool; and, provided the growth of hemp and flax take place, to any considerable degree, in our American Colonies, as recommended in the course of this work, these manufactures might be extended beyond our own consumption, which is very great, and we might be able to export them to advantage, and very soon regain whatever may be given in boun-

ties to encourage these productions. Besides, the manufacturing principally for the government, would give the legislature an opportunity of judging whether or no it be properly conducted.

This useful and extensive plan, if approved and brought to perfection, should be looked on as the offspring of a wise and good government; and, more especially while in its infancy, should receive from the state all necessary assistance and support.

If this is done, there does not appear to be the least doubt but that the scheme will succeed, and prove of infinite advantage.

Thirdly, in order that these manufacturies may be supplied with hands, I humbly propose, that all beggars and vagrants of every denomination, shall be immediately conveyed to these work-houses, there to be obliged to work for twelve months.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That they shall not be allowed above one half of what they earn after they have learnt a trade, and that the other half shall be applied to the uses of the house, and the support of those who cannot work.

Fifthly, I propose that every vagrant, when admitted, shall apply himself to that branch of business, if any such there be in the house, which he understands; if there be no such, then to learn that manufacture which best suits his capacity and abilities; and that he may be excited to become master of his business soon, I propose that he shall be paid but two shillings a week, to purchase necessaries, whilst he is learning the manufacture; and that after he has learnt it, he be paid in the same proportion as he would be in any manufacture of the same kind; but notwithstanding, agreeable to the fourth article, that he shall not receive above one half

of what he earns, to support himself: and further, that out of that half, he shall deposit three pence a week for cloaths.

Sixthly, that he shall receive every Monday morning one fourth part of what he earned the week before, to buy food; and on the Thursday following, the other fourth part, for the same use.

Seventhly, I propose that he shall labour fourteen hours in a day, allowing proper time for his meals, in such manner that there shall remain twelve hours of neat labour. This, where the work is not hard, will not be thought too much; all our laws relative to labour have fixed as much or more. Many think that vagrants should be made to work two hours more.

Eightly, I propose that paper money be coined for the use of the house, which may be advanced, before hand,
to

to the sick, or otherwise, as necessity may require, or as encouragement to the decent, well behaved, cleanly and industrious poor.

Ninthly, I propose that victualling offices be erected in, or adjacent to, these houses, for killing and dressing all manner of provisions proper for the labourers; and also ware-houses for distributing all sorts of necessaries; which shall be sold out to them, at prime cost, allowing only what is reasonable for dressing and waste.

In these offices, I propose that small beer should be brewed, coarse bread baked, bacon, tripe, broth, with all manner of pig, and offal meat, sold ready dressed. Here also should be sold cheese, roots, cheap greens, &c. &c. all at prime cost, allowing only the necessary expences attending the providing and sale of each article.

The foregoing article relates princi-

pally to accidental poor, and not to vagrants, as will be presently seen, and must certainly be very useful: but, as it differs from any scheme I have yet met with, I beg leave to observe upon it, that if every person in this house be left to purchase his own provisions, and to spend his money in his own way, the more industrious he is, and the more frugal in his expences, the sooner will he be able to discharge all his obligations to the house and to the parish; the sooner will he be released from his confinement, and have the full advantage arising from his labour. Hence great motives would arise to frugality and industry, more especially among the accidental poor, of whom I shall next speak.

Accidental poor are supposed to receive nearly one third of the money raised by the poor's rate: these, then, require our principal consideration; for impotent poor must

must always be a burthen, and vagrants you would soon have few or none, provided your house be a house of hard labour, and hard living; as it must be to them, who are to purchase all their necessaries with half of what they earn. And here I must observe, that the building of victualling offices where no food is to be sold, but such as it suits the circumstances of labouring people to eat, will probably have a very good effect on the future œconomy and living of these people; for the principal intention of this plan is to establish good habits.

By accidental poor, I mean such as are by sickness, or any other distress, deprived of the power to maintain themselves and families; and, as it would be cruel to send all these immediately to such a house, I propose,

Tenthly, That every accidental pauper, shall have money advanced to him by the parish, in his or his families di-

strefs, and that he be made a debtor for it, in the parish books; and in his health, or at the removal of such distrefs, be obliged, by order of a vestry, to pay a certain sum, per week, towards refunding the parish, according to his abilities and the circumstances of the times; and in case of failure, to be sent to the work-house, there to repay it out of his earnings, and not to be discharged till both house and parish are fully reimbursed all expence, and a certain sum paid, likewise, towards the support of the impotent. To this sort of poor the observations above, in regard to the purchasing their own provisions, principally relate.

In my considerations, a few pages back, relative to lowering the price of labour, I laid it down as a general maxim, that the most probable method, was to increase the number of labouring hands; and proposed various ways of
doing

doing this ; such as a general naturalization ; a tax on men servants and boys, not employed in trade or agriculture ; and, in order that every obstruction may be removed, and every proper encouragement be given to matrimony, I humbly proposed the repeal of the marriage act ; and farther, that the waste crown-lands be given as marriage portions, to the children of the poor, living in the parishes contiguous to those lands, on condition that they are cultivated in a certain reasonable time, for this would tend to increase the number of hands in agriculture : and effectually to remove the fears of young people, in regard to their having a number of children to maintain by the labour of their hands, which may deter many from marrying ; I propose farther, that no labouring person shall have above two children to maintain, unless he chuses it ; and, that all above that
number,

number, either male or female, shall be deemed the children of the community, be brought up at the general expence, and in a way most approved by it. This brings me now to speak of such children, as well as bastards and other accidental poor children, who have lost their parents, &c.

I therefore, in the eleventh place, humbly propose, that all children, brought up at the public expence, shall be sent to careful and wholesome nurses; that three pence a week be added to the common hire of parish nurses; and that, as a farther encouragement to the care and tenderness of these nurses, all such as return the children to the overseers of the parish, in good health and unmaimed, shall receive one guinea over and above her wages. That when these children are four years old, they shall be sent to the county work-houses, and there be taught to read, two hours
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in a day, and be kept fully employed the rest of their time, in any of the manufactures of the house, which best suits their age, strength and capacity. If it should be objected, that, at these early years, they cannot be made useful, I reply, that at four years of age, there are fundry employments in which children can earn their living; but, besides that, there is a very considerable use in their being, somehow or other, constantly employed, at least, twelve hours in a day, whether they earn their living or not; for by these means, we hope, that the rising generation will be so habituated to constant employment, that it would, at length, prove agreeable and entertaining to them, as it appears to be to the Dutch. And, indeed, this seems to me to be the most probable means of bringing about this desirable event; for it seems as easy to make the Ethiopian change his skin, &c. as to
make

make those who are accustomed to labour but four days in a week, labour six, for the same wages. In vain do we assure these infatuated people, that both themselves and their families would be much happier by doing this, and leaving themselves no time for idleness and debauchery. The voice of reason is not heard by them, and the laws, as now executed, are ineffectual; as hath been shewn in the course of this work. But, from children, thus trained up to constant labour, we may venture to hope the lowering of its price; and as the number of labouring hands will also, by these means, be greatly increased, a kind of necessity will be created, which will operate so as to enforce labour, industry, and frugality. And as, by this county work-house scheme, we shall get rid of all vagrants and common beggars, and make the labour of those who are able to work, help towards supporting the

the impotent poor, and unavoidable objects of charity, our poor's rates will soon be greatly relieved from their present burthen.

Twelfthly, I propose that, at certain seasons, if they are not immediately wanted in the manufactures of the house, the poor of both sexes may be hired out to labour in the fields; for this would tend to keep down the price of labour in agriculture, on any emergency.

Lastly, I propose that encouragement be given to the industrious, sober, and well-behaved poor, particularly to those who keep themselves and their apartments as decent and cleanly as the nature of the plan will admit.

Thus have I gone through all the articles, which, from my present recollection, appear necessary to be enumerated, and in which mine differs from other schemes of this sort.

As to the most proper places for erecting these houses, the divisions of districts, the raising of the money, paying the interest of it, the nature and form of the several buildings, the number of directors, inspectors, clerks, &c. &c. and many other necessary things not mentioned above, I adopt the scheme before mentioned, entitled A Scheme for the better Relief and Employment of the Poor, by a Member of Parliament, printed in the year 1764, where most of these things are considered at large, and are treated of, very judiciously.

If it should be objected, that my scheme is cruel and tyrannical; the best answer I can give is, that no other which I have seen, or can conceive, will answer the purposes of extirpating idleness, restraining debauchery, preventing vagrancy and common begging, employing the poor to advantage, and thereby easing the lands of the present heavy burthen of poor's rates.

Besides, this scheme is far less cruel than the laws of many other states and nations relative to vagrants, and very much less so than a statute of Edward the VIth, quoted in the former part of this work.

I have no idea that the poor can be maintained in a workhouse cheaper than they can be maintained out of it, unless it be such a one as I have above described.

If all vagrants, beggars, and idle poor, are to be immediately conveyed to a work-house; if that house be not a place of confinement, hard labour, and punishment, half the labouring poor of the kingdom would soon be conveyed to workhouses; the houses, in a short time, would be full, and the scheme destroy itself. If the poor are to be better, or more plentifully relieved in a workhouse than out of it, it would never be looked upon as a punishment

to be sent thither; and, therefore, would not answer the ends proposed: but, if it be an house of hard and constant labour, it may prevent people from applying to a parish for relief, unless in real necessity; or induce them readily to pay back the money advanced to them by the parishes, when in real distress.

Upon the whole, I think it clearly appears that nothing but an immediate prospect of distress will operate powerfully enough to produce labour and industry among the generality of our labouring populace.

A scheme calculated upon these natural principles seems to bid the fairest for success. By it, I think, sloth will be the most effectually corrected, industry the most forcibly excited, temperance necessitated, and economy taught. Such an house would be a school, where all those useful lessons might

might be learnt, and where, by a long and constant use of them, they would probably become habitual.

In such a house, it would appear to what extent sobriety, frugality, and industry might be carried; and the consequences of it, to a trading state, be set in the strongest point of view. If in such houses the poor could maintain themselves, by spending half of what they earn, it would prove that they could afford to labour at little more than half the price they now do. In short, if these habits were once to obtain, and become general among our manufacturing poor; if these people could be brought to labour six days in a week, for the same sum which they now earn by labouring four, it would be lowering the price of labour one third, and would produce one third more of manufactures; which, as hath been before observed, might amount to the value of

T

twenty

twenty millions per annum more than we manufacture at present; and we should find ready sale for them all in foreign markets, as we should then be able to undersell our rivals in trade: and though the labour of our poor would be increased, their happiness would likewise increase, from the practice of sobriety, temperance, industry, and œconomy. And here, I cannot help earnestly wishing that our clergy would make a point of frequently recommending to their poor parishioners, the practice of sobriety and constant labour, as the unerring path to happiness, both here and hereafter. This would probably be of great use: for, if the manufacturing poor were once brought to labour constantly six days in the week, they would avoid that road to destruction which the hand of idleness* will be ever pointing out to them, and they would become, almost insensibly, good members of society, and feel the plea-

fures arising from the practice of the
 social virtues : thoughts of God and re-
 ligion would, very probably, find place
 in the hearts of many, who have now
 scarce an idea of either : and as this
 must be of great importance, I agree
 with the schemist above-mentioned,
 “ that an allowance should be made to
 “ some neighbouring clergyman, for
 “ visiting the sick, instructing the poor
 “ in the principles of the Christian
 “ religion, and performing other of-
 “ fices of his function there.”

There are, in this kingdom, many
 poor-houses, which are very improperly
 called work-houses, as little or no work
 is done in them. In such houses, I am
 confident that the poor, in general,
 cost more than would maintain them
 elsewhere.

We have a striking instance of this
 kind at Richmond, in Surry, where, if
 I am rightly informed, the poor, in

what is called the workhouse, have, for several years past, cost the parish ten pounds a head per annum, men, women, and children.

Now, in this house, as well as in all houses of this sort, there are many persons capable of some kinds of labour, who, if they were out of the house, would do something towards their own maintenance; and, with a little assistance from their friends, and a small allowance from the parish, would be supported. Such poor could not expect more from the parish than two shillings a week. If it should be objected, that some of them are utterly incapable of any sort of labour, that one or two of them are insane, and that there are several young children in the house; I answer, that these are no uncommon cases, and are provided for by many parishes without a poor-house: nor can it be supposed to be worth
while

while for a parish to be at the annual expence of house-rent, salaries for the master, matron, and apothecary, coals, candles, &c. which form the establishment of such an house, merely to take care of a few poor; if the far greater part can be maintained out at a cheaper rate. It appears, from my information, that the parish I am speaking of might allow two shillings a week to some, and even three shillings a week to others, who are impotent or insane, and yet save several hundred pounds a year, by maintaining them out. If it should be farther objected, that the poor maintained out, would turn beggars, and become a nuisance; I answer, that the present laws against vagrancy, if duly enforced, would prevent that evil. However, this objection is a strong recommendation of the foregoing plan of County Work-houses; such houses being houses of terror, if vagrants and

common beggars knew that they should be immediately conveyed to them, we should, in all probability, very seldom see any of them in our streets or highways.

The number of beggars we now have is a high reflection on the police of this kingdom, as hath been often observed by foreigners.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that this sketch of a scheme for county work-houses, will not be laid aside on account of any difficulties, which this author hath not foreseen, or provided a remedy for. Such schemes, in general, begin imperfectly, and rise by degrees towards perfection. Experience will discover many unforeseen things, which may appear to be obstructions to the completion of the plan : but, at the same time, experience will discover also the methods of removing them. Let it be a child of government, and it will certainly prosper, and grow up to maturity.

When the woollen manufactory was first established in France, at Nismes, and Abbeville, it laboured under much greater difficulties than this county work-house scheme does now; but, resolution and expence brought it soon to a degree of perfection.

But, to remove every objection to the practicability of a scheme of this sort, there is a work-house near Ipswich, in Suffolk, which, I am informed, hath, for several years past, fully maintained the poor of that town from the profits of the work done in it. It is easy for the legislature to be informed of the principles on which that house is established, in order that the same may be pursued, or improved upon.

One great misfortune is, that when persons, in general, read things of this sort, it is more with a view of finding out difficulties, than with a desire of removing them. For my part, I shall be happy to find, that a scheme for the

employment of the poor is carried into execution, though no part of this sketch should be adopted.

I fully intended to finish this work here, but am just now reminded of an objection made to my considerations on taxes, viz. that I had there laid it down as a maxim, “ that the way to lower “ the price of labour, was to raise the “ price of provisions, and that without “ limitation.” To which I reply, if that work was so vague and loose, as in general, to convey that idea, it was fitter for the flames than the press; but it contains no such maxim.

I have, indeed, argued, both in that work and in this, that an high price of provisions has a natural tendency to keep down the price of labour; and have shewn which way it operates; namely, that the poor are obliged to work more when provisions are dear; and by considering labour and employment as two commodities, carried to market against

each other, and as being under the same influence when there, as other commodities are; that is, to be at an higher or lower price according to the demand: and this is really the natural operation, provided no art or violence intervene. But art and violence ever have intervened when an attempt hath been made to lower the price of labour in our manufactories; and riots, insurrections and secessions have immediately taken place. I have also asserted, that an high price of provisions tends to make labour cheap another way, viz. that at such times work is much better performed, which makes a great difference in the price of it. Again, I have repeatedly asserted that manufactures and commerce were never known to prosper, or be considerably extended, where the necessaries of life were cheap. Farther, if I have not already said it, I now say, that, could any measure be found

found out to lower the price of necessities in this kingdom an hundred per cent, it would prove fatal to its commerce; unless, at the same time, the conduct and disposition of the manufacturing populace be also totally changed. But I have never asserted that the price of labour was any way directly to be lowered in this kingdom: so far from it, that I always greatly feared it never could; and this brings to my mind a scheme of a very judicious friend of mine, who had made these things very much his study, and had visited the manufactories of both France and Holland for information. This scheme, though proposed many years ago, has never yet, that I know of, been communicated to the public, and hath novelty, at least, to recommend it. The reasons why I never recommended it may be seen in my objections to it; and which I wish could be removed, as it
would

would then remain to be one of the best measures we could pursue. Take the author's own words.

“ Nothing can lower the price of
 “ labour directly, in this kingdom, and,
 “ therefore, the business of the politi-
 “ cian is to invent an equivalent, and,
 “ by taking an indirect road, lead the
 “ manufacturing populace to sobriety,
 “ industry and happiness.

“ Now, one way of doing this is, to
 “ let the price of labour remain as it is,
 “ and to lay a tax on the necessaries
 “ which the poor principally consume,
 “ to be paid in a bounty upon our
 “ broad-cloths, or any other of our
 “ exports in which the French under-
 “ sell us; for it appears clearly to me,
 “ that, in general, our manufacturing
 “ poor could very well bear a tax on
 “ their consumption, that would a-
 “ mount to six-pence a week on the
 “ earnings of the family: for the ut-
 “ most

“ most consequence of such tax to them
“ would be, that they must labour a
“ few hours in a week more, and de-
“ bauch a few hours less, and still live
“ as well or better than before; for I
“ am confident that our manufacturing
“ poor, could labour eighty per cent.
“ cheaper than they do now, and yet
“ live better than a Frenchman or a
“ Dutchman.

“ A tax of six-pence a week upon
“ every manufacturing family in the
“ kingdom, I should suppose, would pay
“ a bounty of forty per cent. on all the
“ exports in which the French rival us:
“ by which we should soon recover
“ those trades we have lost, and greatly
“ extend those which remain; so that
“ our poor would have constant em-
“ ployment, which is always a great
“ advantage to them. But let me be
“ understood, that such a tax is only
“ as an equivalent for the high price of
“ labour;

“ labour ; could that be lowered by
“ any means, we should have no need
“ of bounties.”

Thus far my judicious friend. And now for my objections, which remain the same as they were fifteen years ago. A tax which would fall upon the consumption of manufacturing poor to the amount of six-pence a week, must equally affect all our industrious poor in agriculture, and likewise poor trades people, who can but just live when provisions are at a moderate price. To such poor as these, a tax on necessaries would be very severe, more especially as provisions are already raised above their natural value, by the uniting of farms, forestalling, regrating, &c. &c.

It would, indeed, be very hard, that the industrious poor of one class should suffer for the idleness and debauchery of another class : and to lay a tax upon the manufacturing populace, which would
affect

affect no other poor, would, most certainly, produce riots and insurrections; notwithstanding it might be readily made appear, that it would be greatly for their interest, either to lower the price of their labour or to pay such a tax; for if we continue to lose our trade, the poor must starve, the lands without trade could not maintain them.

Upon the whole, we find that labour is not to be lowered, either by increasing our taxes, or by totally abolishing them. It also appears, that a tax on the manufacturing poor, in particular, will not be borne; and we likewise find, that it will be cruel to tax provisions in general, as is done in Holland; because, though the idle poor could bear it, by labouring a little more and living sober, yet the other kinds of industrious poor, who work for less wages, could not bear it without suffering greatly.

What then remains, but that some
other

other plan should be attempted? That, which is here proposed, is humbly submitted to the wisdom of the British Parliament; and, I confess, I have some hopes, that the bringing up of children to constant employment, may be a means of rendering labour habitual and entertaining to them, when they grow up to be men and women; and also, that the great increase in the number of working hands, proposed in this sketch, will most certainly produce a good effect, in regard to lowering the price of labour. Add to these the great improvements that may be made upon it by the legislature, and we may surely hope, that time will produce a change in the conduct of our manufacturing populace, much to their advantage, as well as to that of the kingdom in general.

I flatter myself that enough has now been said to obviate the above objection,
and

and to exculpate me from so ridiculous an assertion ; namely, “ that by raising
 “ the price of provisions, we should di-
 “ rectly lower the price of labour.” But if this is not sufficient, I refer the reader to page twenty-two of *Considerations on Taxes*, where I say, “ I
 “ did not set out with an intent to
 “ prove that high taxes are in general
 “ a benefit to a state ; but only that
 “ those, which the exigencies of this
 “ kingdom have rendered necessary,
 “ have not hitherto raised the price of
 “ labour in our manufactories, rendered
 “ manufactures dear, and lessened our
 “ foreign trade.” The original intention of that work, as well as of this, was to disarm opposition of one of its principal weapons on the head of taxes, and to calm the minds of the trading and mercantile part of the nation, who, in general, conceive that our foreign trade is ruined by our accumulated
 taxes,

taxes, and of course impute every disadvantage they feel, to this source of mercantile calamities, and to the ill conduct of a ministry, for suffering so large a national debt to remain in time of peace.

But I have already shewn the injustice of such an imputation, and fully proved, that the price of provisions can by no means govern the price of labour: yet, farther to support this opinion, I shall here introduce some quotations from a writer*, whose uncommon share of public favour sufficiently evinces, that he adopts the sentiments of the most complete judges of this very important subject.

In page eighteen, of *The Expediency*

* The author of *The Expediency* of allowing the Free Exportation of Corn; *The Farmer's Letters*; *A Six Weeks and Six Month's Tour*, &c. lately published by W. Nicoll, in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

of allowing the free Exportation of Corn, he says,

“ In the year 1767, I took a journey
“ into Wales, the minutes of which I
“ laid before the public, under the title
“ of A Six Weeks Tour.

“ I found in that journey that there
“ was not any proportion between the
“ rates of labour and those of provi-
“ sions.

“ The year following, I made a simi-
“ lar tour through the North of En-
“ gland, and found, throughout above
“ two thousand five hundred miles of
“ country, that the rates of labour, in
“ no respect, depended on those of pro-
“ visions.

“ Bread, butter, cheese and meat be-
“ ing thrown into one aggregate price,
“ and the earnings of a family the
“ same ; the following was the compa-
“ rison which arose.

Aggre-

TRADE AND COMMERCE. 291

Aggregate price of provisions.

Earnings of a family.

D.				L.	S.	D.
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	per lb.	—	—	51	8 0
2	$\frac{3}{4}$	—	—	—	51	3 10
3	—	—	—	—	53	2 4
3	$\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	—	47	16 0
3	$\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	—	50	1 11
3	$\frac{3}{4}$	—	—	—	50	17 11
4	—	—	—	—	50	10 8

BREAD ALONE.

D.				L.	S.	D.
	$\frac{3}{4}$	per lb.	—	—	47	5 10
1	—	—	—	—	51	9 6
1	$\frac{1}{4}$	—	—	—	51	17 11
1	$\frac{1}{2}$	—	—	—	50	12 3
1	$\frac{3}{4}$	—	—	—	50	12 11
2	—	—	—	—	51	16 4

“ Were the price of provisions the
 “ director of that of labour, these
 “ tables would be in exact degradation,
 “ but the contrary is as near the truth ;
 “ so very far is the rate of the one
 “ from the rule of the other, that they
 “ are mostly in opposition. Those who

U 2

“ pay

“ pay four-pence a pound, earn less,
 “ by three pounds a year, than others,
 “ who are fed at three-pence; the rate
 “ of three-pence half-penny is attend-
 “ ed by less earnings, by six pounds a
 “ year, than three-pence. The lowest
 “ price of provisions, two-pence half-
 “ penny, is attended with eighteen
 “ shillings a year greater earnings than
 “ four-pence, the highest price.

“ In bread alone the man who pays
 “ a penny a pound, earns as much,
 “ within a few shillings, as he who
 “ pays two-pence, and he who eats it
 “ at one penny farthing more. In
 “ whatever view the table is thrown,
 “ the same contradictions appear; and,
 “ turn and twist the comparison how
 “ you will, in no instance will you find
 “ that labour is high, because provi-
 “ sions are the same: you will in more
 “ instances find the reverse to be the
 “ fact.”

In

In page twenty-seven, of the same work, this author says, “ But, in the
 “ name of common-sense, where are
 “ the facts, and what are the reason-
 “ ings, that prove a high rate of pro-
 “ visions an enemy to manufactures?
 “ It is a matter, indeed, that has been
 “ taken so much for granted, that these
 “ gentlemen have disdained to exercise
 “ their powers of reasoning upon it:
 “ they give you an *ipse dixit* to make
 “ what you can of.

Again, in pages twenty-eight and twenty-nine, he adds, “ Living must
 “ be rendered dear before that general
 “ industry, which can alone support a
 “ manufacturing people, will be rooted
 “ amongst them. There is not an in-
 “ stance in Europe of a country making
 “ great advances in manufactures, while
 “ such country continued under the pos-
 “ sibility of labour being low.” Again,
 he says, “ In these countries where ma-

“ manufactures make the greatest shoots,
 “ provisions are the highest; viz. Hol-
 “ land and Britain. Yet, notwith-
 “ standing such high prices, who will
 “ assert that manufactures are carried
 “ to greater perfection in countries
 “ where provisions and labour are
 “ lower?” In pages twenty-nine and
 thirty this author goes on to say,

“ It is a fact well known through
 “ all the manufacturing towns in this
 “ kingdom, that the labouring poor
 “ work no more days in a week than
 “ are sufficient to maintain themselves;
 “ the remainder is spent in idleness.

“ When provisions are very cheap,
 “ they are more distressed, and their
 “ families more unhappy, than in the
 “ very dearest times; for a man who
 “ wastes half his time in idleness, or,
 “ perhaps, in what is worse, will be a
 “ poor workman the other half.”

It is with pleasure that I reflect on
 my

my having repeatedly expressed myself to this effect, both in the Considerations on Taxes, and in these sheets. I likewise agree entirely with this judicious author in regard to the free exportation of corn; and am confident, that the preventing it will never promote manufactures, unless, contrary to the opinion of those who assert that it will, it could be done by Raising the price of wheat; and this it might do, even to a Famine, provided the crop should fail, at the same time, in three or four growing countries, and that we could not be supplied from our colonies. Such times have been known in England, if we credit STOWE and Bishop FLEETWOOD.

Indeed, it is amazing that any, even a temporary, stop should be put to the exportation of corn upon this mistaken principle; for, it is generally allowed that wheat has been cheaper since the

bounty, than before ; and, the great advantage to the farmer hath arisen from the regularity of it's price, not from the enhancement, for there has been none.

I shall add to this work one paragraph more from the last mentioned author, and then conclude. In pages twenty-one and twenty-two, he says as follows :

“ If a man attempts to solve every
 “ difficulty that arises in the various
 “ combinations of this subject from
 “ mere reasoning, he will certainly
 “ meet with various contradictions that
 “ cannot be accounted for. Labour
 “ ought, absolutely, to depend on the
 “ rates of provisions, and be regulated
 “ by them alone ; but what ought to
 “ be, and what is, are here, as every
 “ where else, two very different af-
 “ fairs. In certain places and districts,
 “ provisions being much higher than
 “ usual, (whether the rate be reason-
 able

“ able or unreasonable) occasioned a
 “ great clamour, and much rioting,
 “ among the drunken, idle part of the
 “ poor, who sometimes prevail so far,
 “ if they coincide with the private opi-
 “ nion of the neighbouring justices of
 “ the peace, as either to gain a rise of
 “ wages or an increase of poor’s-rates;
 “ but, provisions falling in price, will
 “ lower neither the one nor the other,
 “ nor will they rise according to any
 “ proportion. A set of justices in any
 “ neighbourhood will have it in their
 “ power, either to raise labour extra-
 “ vagantly, or to keep it as unreason-
 “ ably low, if it was so before: the
 “ private conduct and opinion of parish
 “ officers and masters will also have a
 “ great effect. When the changes of
 “ rates of labour are subject to such va-
 “ riations, as exceed the utmost power
 “ of the keenest calculator to lay down
 “ in proportions, can we be surprized
 “ that

“ that so little agreement should be
 “ found, between the present rates of
 “ labour and the prices of provisions?
 “ And with what degree of propriety can
 “ the enemies of the bounty clamour
 “ against it, from raising the price of
 “ labour from heightening that of
 “ corn, when it, in fact, lowers the
 “ latter, and, in no case, could possibly
 “ affect the former?”

After what has been said, I now
 leave it to the unbiased judgment of the
 reader to determine whether our taxes
 are the principal causes of the high
 price of labour in our manufactories, or
 whether it does not appear rather to
 proceed from the conduct of our manu-
 facturing populace.

The evil is agreed on by all; it is
 the cause only which we differ about.
 Now it becomes necessary that the cause
 should also be known, before the re-
 medy is attempted.

The

The principal evil is allowed, on all hands, to be the high price of labour in our manufacturies. The principal cause of the high price of labour, I have all along supposed to be the disposition of our manufacturing populace for idleness and debauchery; this appearing to me the most probable of any yet offered.

The next thing to be considered is the remedy, which, it is to be hoped, the wisdom of the legislature will soon discover, and properly apply.

The difficulty of effecting this, upon the footing of any plan hitherto proposed, has undoubtedly been the reason why it has been left in the state it was found, by several successive parliaments; so that nothing has been applied to the cure of a disorder, which, if suffered to proceed much farther, will be incurable, and prove the ruin of the nation.

Our great trade to America has acted
like

like an opiate in this our malady ; it has blunted our feelings, and, for a time, raised our spirits ; but, like the patient after the effects of the opiate is exhausted, I fear we shall feel more intensely, with powers much weakened and impaired. However, in tracing the cause of this political and national disorder, we find that one sort of people only are infected with it, and this is our manufacturing populace. Our labourers in agriculture work constantly for small wages, and they can do no more ; and our lower sort of trades people can but barely live at the present price of provisions. For their sakes, then, we should wish that some effectual method be taken to prevent any art being made use of to raise them higher : but we have shewn, that the manufacturing populace could bear a much greater price by labouring only a small part of their time more than they

they do at present, and by living sober, frugal, temperate, and virtuous.

We have now brought the evil to a point: all we want is that the manufacturing people should labour cheaper, or, which would be better for them and for the state, that they should labour six days for the same money they now earn in four; and I am confident they could do this, and yet live much better than a French-man or a Dutch-man. This alone would recover the trades we have lost, and greatly extend those which remain; and, whatever the manufacturing poor may now think of it, I would risk my life upon the event, that they would be much happier by this alteration in their conduct. However, this is the object of my present address to the legislature of this kingdom, from whose united wisdom I have much to hope. Upon the whole, I dare to flatter myself, that my intention

will

will apologize for the liberty I have taken, as well as for the errors which will doubtless be met with in a work of this nature.

T H E E N D.



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